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**BOLSHEVISM, FASCISM
AND DEMOCRACY**



BOLSHEVISM, FASCISM AND DEMOCRACY

BY
FRANCESCO NITTI
EX-PRIME MINISTER OF ITALY

Translated by
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Umana libertà, come sei cara
LEONARDO DA VINCI

THIS study is dedicated to my grandfather, Carbonaro and Liberal, who died for freedom under the Bourbon reaction of 1861 ;

To his sons who, in 1848, were persecuted, sentenced, and exiled ,

To my father, a zealous apostle of the liberal idea, a member of Young Italy, a leader in Mazzini's Sacred Phalanx, and a soldier under Garibaldi during the Italian wars of independence ,

To my son Vincenzo, a volunteer at sixteen, convinced that he was fighting for the freedom of the peoples and for democracy in Italy.

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BOLSHEVISM, FASCISM, AND DEMOCRACY

I

Liberty in peril after the World War

I CAN still recall a long conversation which I had many years ago with W. E. Gladstone on the occasion of one of his visits to Italy — I think the last.

He was very old, and he had evinced a desire to retire from politics.

But his mind was none the less vigorous and his speech wonderfully rich and expressive.

Like all old people who have lived intensely, he loved to tell of his experiences.

He insisted on speaking Italian, and his efforts to find words added yet further to the interest of what he said.

He told me of his visit to Naples, directly after the events of 1848, of his sympathies with the Liberals, and the efforts he made to prevent heavy sentences and persecutions.

On his return he found the utmost indifference in England. It was no easy matter for him to

rouse public opinion to enthusiasm for the cause of Italy. But in spite of the hostile inertia of the Conservatives, he had at last stirred up a movement against the Italian reaction, and more especially against the Bourbons.

"I could not resign myself," he told me, "to seeing a great people enslaved, and, what is more, enslaved by a vulgar tyranny. Nothing is more precious than freedom. Without freedom nothing great can be accomplished."

Then he added :

"Freedom is like the air. we do not realise how much we need it until we begin to miss it. Certainly it is possible to survive with very little air in a mine or a prison, but we experience the joy of life and health only where the air is pure and free."

Some years later, in 1912, I was Minister of Commerce, and was spending my holiday with my colleague, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Marquis di San Giuliano, in the forest of Vallambrosa.

The Marquis di San Giuliano had a cultured and subtle mind. He had lost nothing, in his political career, of the Grecian elegancies of his Sicilian home.

We talked more of poetry and art than of politics, and he loved to recite from memory, as we walked in the forest, long passages from Shakespeare and Goethe, of whom he had a marvellous knowledge.

One evening I found him greatly moved, deep in the letters of Richard Wagner, whom he had entertained many years earlier in his villa, perched on the flank of Etna. The master had written long letters, telling of the conversations that most interested him. He had been told that in 1848 Garibaldi, during the defence of Rome, had endeavoured to avoid the use of artillery, in spite of the desperate situation of his men, lest he should injure the artistic treasures in the town.

At this Wagner was seized with fury.

"But what do works of art matter?" he wrote.

"How wretched is art without freedom!"

San Giuliano said he had never seen him so violent.

And we know, too, that this passion for freedom was shared by Beethoven, that divine genius of sound. Democrat and Liberal, he spoke of freedom with religious reverence.

These far off memories, and a whole life devoted to the service of peace and democracy, make me deeply conscious of the peril to freedom which menaces the civilisation and the very life of Europe at the present time.

Freedom? Many people smile at the word. Democracy? Parliaments? There are few who do not speak ill of Parliaments, especially among those who have been disappointed in their desire to gain entry to them.

Only a few years ago, during the war, we were

saying that Europe was divided into two camps. One half, constituting the Entente, was at grips with the other half in the defence of freedom—so it was said—against the menace of German centralisation and German uniformity.

In reality, the distinction was somewhat arbitrary. The Entente, as far as half its population is concerned, consisted of Tsarist Russia, which had nothing to teach about freedom, and which, under the feeble and cruel rule of a half-witted mystic, shared responsibility for the events that were so fatal to Europe and to world civilisation.

In any case, the result of the war has been that two great European States have lost their freedom, and others are in danger of losing it.

Russia and Italy are now in fact ruled by minority Governments, with conflicting aims, yet both based upon force.

Besides this there are dictatorships of varying types, or reactionary Governments, in Spain, Turkey, Poland, Portugal, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Greece.

Hardly one of the Austro-Hungarian Succession States has retained its freedom. At any rate, that is true of the large populations representing other nationalities.

Most often it is racial minorities which oppress the majorities. Nevertheless, there are cases where majorities impose their rule upon minorities.

In Great Britain, France, Belgium, Holland, and

the Scandinavian countries, and even in Germany, it seems that democracy and the development of free institutions have nothing to fear and are definitely assured

But even in countries where democracy has long been established reactionary parties are not lacking, they aim at the forcible seizure of power by minorities, and at more or less camouflaged dictatorship

Both in France and Germany we find parties which proclaim every reactionary principle clericalism, anti Semitism, militarism, the return to monarchy.

Yet more ridiculous, even England has small minorities whose whole effort is devoted to enterprises of this kind, though they do not indeed appear capable of striking root in Great Britain. We find Conservative journals written, apparently, by reactionaries of the old school, and others which, though they dare not glorify violence as a system of government in a free country, yet glorify and defend it in those countries where it flourishes

Even in free countries we see the falsest principles restored to a place of honour the worship of force, the cult of the national State as the ruling factor in social life, contempt for Parliaments, sometimes concealed, sometimes openly proclaimed

These are the principles of former absolutism, more or less disguised

The peoples no longer strive to limit the sphere

of their sovereigns' activities, as they did in the early days of the older democracies. Indeed, the sovereigns have almost vanished from the scene, and, except in a few countries, the sphere of their personal activity is sufficiently limited. But free peoples need to defend themselves against insolent and turbulent minorities.

There are Red minorities which constitute a menace. Indeed, they rouse opposition among the workers themselves, and stand little chance of prevailing. But they frequently serve as a reason or excuse for the organisation of White minorities, which meet with an indulgent welcome and receive support, direct or indirect, among the richer classes, and especially among those whom the war has enriched.

The new rich constitute the most immoral class in the whole of Europe. Wealth, also, needs education. To be rich without being vulgar, one must have the habit of wealth. In fact, the new rich are without scruples and without any conception of law. They are themselves corrupted and love to corrupt others. Their fortunes are the outcome of bloodshed, or more often of fraud and speculation. I know several different types, but all are of a low moral order.

One of them, belonging to the highest circles, was pointed out to me as a suspect when I was in the Government and in the Supreme War Council during the most difficult period of the

World War The Ambassador of a great Allied Power revealed his crafty dealings to me, which pointed to equivocal relations with the enemy After the war this same individual, now immensely rich, supported, advised and stimulated every reactionary movement, whilst he subsidised and controlled a corrupt Press

The people rarely resent wealth which is acquired by work, nor inherited wealth, which is often associated with distinguished names Men whose activities have enriched themselves and their country generally enjoy the respect even of their rivals But there is always something repulsive in the immense fortunes acquired through the war We mistrust the new rich, and they mistrust themselves That, indeed, is why they are always disposed to support reactionary enterprises, and why their Press is despicable

A strange mood has come over us a practical quietism which urges us to accept any and every form of organisation which guarantees the conservation of things as they are

In the course of a single century we have passed from Lord Byron, who was ready to die for the freedom of a people, from Garibaldi, who was ready to fight for the freedom of all peoples, from the splendid army of French idealists and romantics, always ready to welcome the most lofty products of human effort—from all these to robber chiefs and reactionary adventurers

Even the ancient fraud of absolute Governments is restored to honour. Thirty years ago an attack on the freedom of one nation roused all other peoples. In every country there were young men willing to sacrifice themselves for a sacred cause.

Now, it is as though a word of command had been passed round, bidding us to remain indifferent. There are rules of good manners which require international cynicism.

Faced with the downfall of a people's freedom, with the restoration of absolutism, with the proclamation of the principle of force, it is correct to say that these are internal affairs, and that it is better not to meddle with them.

Even where freedom is not actually menaced, it is passing through a time of crisis. We must state this fact, and determine whether the crisis is transitory, whether it is merely the consequence of post-war conditions, or whether it is permanent, or at any rate likely to outlast our time.

In all nations the war has produced not merely a mentality prone to violence, but a predisposition to isolated action—nay more, to theatrical fooling. People want a hero, a dramatic spectacle—they want the kind of man whom Bacon called *idola theatri*.

Democracy is very often tiresome, with its regulations, its principles, the chief of which is equality before the law. What is there to admire in even the best of Parliaments? On the other hand, people are often lured by the unexpected.

They demand a hero. Whether a revolutionary or a reactionary hero does not matter, so long as he is spectacular.

In face of great difficulties every sensible and intelligent man desires to unite his own efforts with the efforts of others for the common good. But old-fashioned clerical education has accustomed us somewhat to miracles. Revolution, like reaction, is the secular miracle of ignorant people. If there is a crisis, political or economic, they look for a miracle. They have a horror of practical expedients. They speak of politicians in high places as of Aces of Aviation.

This clamour for the unexpected, for the unknown, for dramatic crises, is the radical weakness of the present day, and one of the greatest menaces to freedom. Even among democracies there are citizens who are inclined to renounce a part of their freedom in favour of the unknown hero. And when that hero turns up, he is frequently an adventurer or a charlatan.

Modern peoples are too apt to forget that there is no salvation but in order and democracy—that is, in freedom.

[Of all forms of government, democracy is that which requires in a people the highest moral and intellectual standards. We should observe that throughout Europe the war has lowered intellectual and moral standards, and therein lies the explanation of dictatorships.

Discarded institutions are being restored to the place of honour. It is argued that a dictatorship works better than a Ministry and far better than a Parliament. That is not only a kind of intellectual laziness, but also a kind of mental decadence.

Classes which argue after this manner are doomed to decadence. Nothing can check the downfall of people without will power, who are ready to renounce the gains of civilisation won through centuries of effort.

Freedom is the best guarantee of security for all peoples, but great wars always pave the way for political instability and social disorder.

We should remember the words of Xenophon at the present time. Both an onlooker and a participant in the great wars of his own era, several centuries before Christ, he began his *Cyropædia* thus:

"One day I observed how many democracies had been overthrown by men who preferred any other form of government, how many monarchies and oligarchies had been destroyed by popular mutinies, how many ambitious men had been deprived of the sovereign power which they had usurped, and how greatly men admired the good fortune and skill of those who succeeded in maintaining themselves in power for some time. I then reflected that in individual households composed either of a large body of servants or a few, the heads cannot control even those few."

When freedom declines, security itself is soon lacking, and men are so blinded that they will not see the truth.

Xenophon was indeed right when he concluded "From these reflections I deduced that no animal is more difficult for man to control than man."

In truth, Governments based on freedom will be henceforth the only lasting Governments

II

The consequences of the War

It was easy to foresee this crisis in the history of freedom. In modern countries, where great wars are no longer waged by professional armies but by whole nations, they are always followed by revolutions and by periods of reaction.

Diseases, like criminals, tend to congregate together. The same is true of great calamities to mankind. In the Scriptures, war, famine, and pestilence are visitations of the Lord, succeeding one another or appearing together.

Every great war which brings great masses of humanity into conflict with one another is followed by great upheavals.

Between the Napoleonic wars and the World War of 1914-18 the greatest was the Franco-German War of 1870. It lasted barely seven months. The number of killed and wounded on both sides was not more than half the number of killed for Italy alone in the World War. There were fewer cannon shots than in a single day of the Great War. The indemnity imposed upon the vanquished was only five milliards, and the occupation of territory lasted for a very short time. Thus the war was sufficiently limited in its extent and

in its results. In spite of that France, the vanquished country, experienced the Commune, the downfall of the Empire, and a long and bitter struggle between democracy and the spirit of reaction.

On the other hand, Prussia, the victorious country, after she had attained German unity, experienced an unexpected and vigorous revival of Socialism in opposition to militarism. Deep-seated religious strife, a fierce struggle against the Catholic Church, produced new types of religious intolerance and social cleavages which penetrated far deeper than any before the war.

War rouses great masses of human beings and inevitably incites them to passion, accustoms them to violence, and stirs up revolutionary movements. The menace of revolution drives the rich, the timid, and the doubting into reaction. That is why revolutions are often followed by periods of reaction.

The instinctive aversion to war felt by the mass of the people arises in part from a consciousness of the perils which it brings in its train. Whoever was responsible for the European War, it was the most shameful, the most criminal, within the memory of civilised man. First and foremost, it was a European civil war, which robbed both victors and vanquished of countless men, of untold wealth and happiness. First and foremost, it was a European war, which robbed victors and vanquished more or less equally. Everybody lost

something - some wealth, some domestic peace, others, finally, their freedom. It is impossible to picture these losses without sorrow, they represent the destruction of moral ideals even more than material wealth.

Upon whom does the responsibility rest for such a conflict? Even if we admit that Germany was very largely responsible (and to deny or minimise her guilt would be very dishonest), all serious politicians and all who have studied the question now recognise that a considerable share of responsibility falls upon Austria Hungary, and a further share upon Russia, that is to say, these two States were bound to wage war sooner or later for domestic reasons.

The truth which cries out from all the diplomatic documents is that it was possible to delay the conflict, but not to prevent it.

Lloyd George has said that the false step was taken almost without anyone noticing it. That is true. What is even more true is that sooner or later the system of alliances which had grown up was bound to lead to war.

But it is of the first importance to realise that responsibility can be traced to a few individuals, and does not rest upon the peoples. The constitutions of European States, even before the war and the present reactionary developments, worked so badly that the peoples could exercise no real control over their Governments.

Historians love to represent what happened as being willed by great political units—England, France, Germany, Russia, Belgium, Italy, and so on. In fact, it was certain individuals who brought about the war.

The three great Continental empires—Russia, Germany, Austria Hungary—were governed by small cliques. Foreign policy was wholly in the hands of the sovereigns, of a few men enjoying their confidence, and of the military chiefs. And what mediocrities they were! I knew many of them, with a few I stood on terms of friendship. The old Emperor of Austria Hungary was surrounded by men who, for the most part, enjoyed neither authority nor prestige. Very likely he desired peace, but all those around him were pushing him in the direction of war. No one who did not know Ministers like Berchtold can really grasp the tragedy. He possessed neither the intelligence, nor the earnestness, nor even the moral dignity to manage properly a factory with ten hands, and he it was who directed and determined the fate of an empire with a population of fifty-four millions.

Nicholas II, a degenerate, superstitious mystic, desired peace also, maybe, and was drawn into war against his will. But what did his feeble will weigh against such men as the Grand Duke Nicholas and unscrupulous officials like Sazanof and Isvolsky?

What, with rare exceptions, was the intellectual

standing of those whom William II favoured, in his boundless vulgarity and vanity ?

Absolute power invariably lends itself to abuse and corruption. The three great European empires, though they were led along different roads, were doomed to bring us war. Less than twenty or thirty men, perhaps, controlled the destinies of more than three hundred millions, and their agreements, their feuds, their activities, their endeavours, often their financial speculations, were unknown not only to the mass of citizens, but even to the best informed among them, at times even to other Ministers.

It is true that even democratic countries have sometimes plunged into the most hazardous adventures without consultation of their Parliaments. The Parliaments were obliged to ratify what had already been done.

Italy took military action in Lybia not only without consulting the Chamber, but without even Cabinet discussion, and it was this action that brought about the Turco-Italian war, and consequently the two Balkan wars which, in their turn, prepared the way for the European conflict.

In 1915, too, Italy entered the war without a Cabinet decision.

Even in democratic France, where there is a long-standing Parliamentary tradition, actions which involved foreign policy were not always known to Parliament.

Perhaps it is only the Constitution of the United States of America which adequately circumscribes the actions of the President and Secretary of State in the matter of foreign policy, at least so far that there is no fear of warlike adventures caused by the influence of individuals

Has the experience of the war served any useful purpose? Are the days of secret diplomacy past and gone? Is there no longer cause to fear the activities of certain persons? Are no alliances and agreements being concluded in spite of the League of Nations, which may pave the way for fresh wars?

I would not venture to declare as much

Ten million men were killed, more than a thousand milliard gold francs was spent, a terribly large number of disabled and wounded has meant the loss of productive capacity in Europe. Our continent has been Balkanised and no longer holds the leadership of the modern world

And all that is the work of a handful of men

Even now, after such carnage, the peoples do not hate one another, and the labour of peace making would encounter minds ready to welcome any effort towards union, were it not for the activities of a mischievous Press and the political incitements of many of those who bear the heaviest responsibility

Even before the war the great democracies were preoccupied with economic struggles, they believed their liberties at home to be secure, and

attributed small importance to questions of foreign policy. But errors of foreign policy were just what caused the war, and the war has brought about a crisis in the matter of freedom and democracy.

So long as there is a constant danger of war, freedom is imperilled.

The tendency of the State is to consolidate its power, not to promote economic development. Questions of security come to overshadow the movement towards social reform.

To work for peace is to work for freedom. To promote unity amongst the nations is to work for democracy.

The vast phenomenon of reaction and disorder which manifests itself everywhere in varying ways springs from like causes.

We believed that we had overthrown William II, that *miles gloriosus*, that swaggering warrior who brandished his sword even when there was no excuse, who quoted the Bible and invoked the spirit of reaction against the light of democracy, who recalled the blood-stained glory of the Huns before his troops embarked for China. And we have actually overthrown him. The peoples who declared themselves united against him in the name of freedom and democracy have vanquished him.

But the spirit which lived in him remains. Certain heads of Governments are now uttering

words which he would never have dared to speak, words which are an absolute negation not only of freedom and democracy, but of the very principles of social order. Insanely, cynically, force is exalted, imperialistic proclamations are drawn up, the right of conquest is declared.

Some peoples applaud reaction, others practise it, and others again call for it.

Even to day there are men who will glorify force.

Actual dictatorships are established, and dictatorships in embryo develop.

Ten years ago, in the hour of peril, we proclaimed the union of the nations, the necessity for disarmament. The war was to prepare the way for peace.

What has actually happened?

We have more men under arms than before, more than ever we are divided, and free institutions are held in scorn by greater numbers than at any time during the past century.

III

The theory and practice of liberty in the nineteenth century

REACTION, then, is in full swing. This sickness of democracy, this crisis in the history of freedom, were foreseen. But have we here a passing phenomenon, or have we reached a halt in the forward march of our civilisation?

To answer these questions we must look back upon all the European crises following upon great wars. If the crisis is more serious this time, it is because this war surpassed all previous wars, alike in extent and in violence.

The generations which grow up after wars do not seem to value freedom or to believe in democracy as others do. We were brought up in the faith that freedom is not merely necessary, but more essential than anything else in life.

Thirty years ago certain principles of political, economic, and religious freedom seemed definitely to have become the property of the more civilised section of mankind.

In the universities and Parliaments, and especially on political questions, we were all disciples of the English Liberal philosophers.

John Stuart Mill's book *On Liberty* moulded the

Liberal thought of two generations before the war. We regarded it not only as a monument of English wisdom, but also as a synthesis of the practical British spirit. We were certain that all unjustified coercion was an evil. We regarded freedom as an absolute good, and human personality as inviolable in the harmonious development of its moral and spiritual qualities. We believed that freedom should be considered not merely as necessary to civil life, but as the common aim, on which depend all other aims, spiritual, civil, and political.

In our eyes religious liberty was no longer a subject of dispute. We all held that the human family would gain infinitely more if men were free to think, live, and act in their own way, than if they were compelled to live, think, and act according to a prescribed rule.

Freedom of conscience, freedom of association, scientific freedom, the freedom of the Press—all these were unquestioned. We all held that no moral progress was possible unless freedom were assured.

No political authority—not even the most lawful—had in our eyes the right to oppress minorities.

Economists considered intercourse between nations as being based upon economic freedom, which itself determined the division of human labour, alike for individuals and for nations.

Not only thinkers and statesmen worthy of the name, but Parliaments and the Press declared that freedom should be a law guiding the conduct of the nations, both abroad and at home, after the long struggle of mankind

It is the fashion now to decry freedom. When I was young even politicians who were regarded as reactionary made a great point of proving that they demanded temporary restrictions and limitations only in order to make freedom the more secure

I remember a talk I had with Crispi, he was then extremely old, and at the height of his political power. I had accused him of abjuring his past and of reactionary conduct. My articles had pained him deeply, and he sent word to me that he wished to speak with me at once.

I found him greatly agitated. Like Clemenceau he spoke in sudden jerks, with incisive, sometimes violent, expressions, which always hit the mark. I have seldom seen so great a resemblance between European politicians, among all whom I have known, as there was between Crispi and Clemenceau. The same type of patriotism, the same inability to forget, the same individualistic outlook, which lay concealed beneath the same phrases.

"You have accused me of sinning against freedom; you are young and there are many things of which you may be ignorant. Assuredly you do not know what my life has been—wholly

devoted to the cause of freedom I would rather see Italy poor than rich and in bondage There can be no greatness without freedom I desire the greatness of Italy, but most of all I desire freedom "

Then he explained to me carefully his reasons for the measures he had taken They were provisional in character, and he regarded them as necessary under the circumstances

I was not wholly convinced, but I felt ashamed of my youthful arrogance in the presence of this old man's distress, who, even in his errors, had served his country and the cause of freedom all his life with equal zeal, and I had no hesitation in saying to him that I had exaggerated and was perhaps mistaken, but that I had never doubted his purpose

And now, in this same Italy, the head of the Government speaks of the putrefying corpse of freedom and of the end of democracy He repeats and exaggerates the same foolish talk for which we blamed William II

In our youth we met with two conceptions of freedom the British and the French

To the English people freedom is rather a historical fact than a political idea Without any theoretical formula, the English people have won, step by step, those liberties which have become the foundation of their liberal institutions

To the French freedom has been an intellectual idea, an affirmation of principle superior to all the

chances of historical events, an affirmation of human personality with its chains cast off

These two conceptions united in our minds, and our own enjoyment of freedom accustomed us to regard our heritage as inviolable, the reward of centuries of struggle for the emancipation of mankind

Before the Declaration of the Rights of Man was proclaimed in France, the Constitution of the United States of America of September 17, 1787, was the greatest event in modern history. This Constitution, which is an admirable blend of practical wisdom and idealism, gave effect to the principle of self government, it laid the foundations of a great republic at a time when the world contained hardly anything but despotic monarchies. This was the first great democracy to establish itself in the modern world, and it was destined, by its example and its vitality, to overthrow the monarchical ideal which had hitherto held sway, and to impose upon those monarchies which still had a part to play in history institutions almost republican in character, as in the case of Great Britain.

The basic problem of liberty has been plainly stated for several centuries for those peoples who have attained social consciousness and have advanced perceptibly along the path of their evolution

Can highly developed societies allow dynasties or narrow political castes, which base their activities

upon force, to organise and regiment all social forces? Is it not better, in the actual interests of the whole community, that each section of society should organise itself spontaneously, according to its own needs and its own impulse?

If the authoritarian idea was possible at the close of the feudal era, when the need of a strong State was felt, it is ludicrous in a society comprising the immense social forces of Capital and Labour, the great powers of industry, the great organisations of the Press, vast movements of thought and life.

The dynastic, authoritarian, dictatorial type of government is neither possible nor stable in a civilian society which has reached a certain stage of maturity, and which aims at organising itself in a State that is the natural and organic expression of its character, and not the regime imposed by a minority.

The nineteenth century, scorned and disparaged by the ignorant to day, was the century of human liberty, of free trade, of great discoveries, and it was also the century which established the principle of nationality and saw the union of great racial groups.

For many years Conservatives and democrats never argued about freedom, as regards the social institutions, traditional or acquired, of the two parties. Without repudiating freedom, the Conservatives, especially in Great Britain, sought to maintain their privileges, whilst at the same time

they adapted themselves to new methods. The Conservatives did not deny that every citizen has the right to vote. They contented themselves with saying that the vote should be granted only to men attaining an adequate intellectual standard (examination certificates), or having an interest in the conservation of society (property and income). Without denying the right of all citizens to benefit from public funds, they upheld certain financial obligations and restrictions which in practice kept the majority at arm's length.

They did not dispute the value of education, but they wanted responsibility for education to rest with the father of the family.

On the surface it appears that not only did they desist from calling the principle of freedom in question, but they were its most logical supporters.

Until after the war we never saw the principle of freedom repudiated in any Western democracy. Parliaments were criticised, but their critics sought to adapt them to the new forms of social life. The only criticism of freedom was levelled against the negative principle involved, and men's efforts aimed as a rule at the organisation of social forces in such a way as to render free institutions more effective.

Twenty years ago in Great Britain, in France, in Italy, not only the suppression of freedom, but even its theoretical repudiation, would have been considered ludicrous.

Italy in 1860, still divided into a number of States, found in Mazzini the Liberal thinker who, more than any other, moulded the national mind. It may be asserted confidently that to him more than to anyone else, if not to him alone, was due the awakening consciousness of national unity in the Italian mind. Mazzini was a noble figure, a great soul, who combined extreme mysticism with a practical sense of reality. He wrote like an apostle and acted like a shrewd and experienced conspirator.

Mazzini, the thinker, the disseminator of ideas, Cavour, the great Minister and realist, both had lived long in England, and their heritage was not only the theory of English Liberalism, but, what is more, the love of freedom.

Mazzini, renouncing all honours, sacrificed even his programme and his republican ideal to attain unity. He did not oppose the monarchy (he was neither an apostate nor a rebel, he said). None the less, he loved freedom even better than his country. "I love freedom," he said. "Perhaps I love it even better than my country. Without freedom one's country is only a prison."

Every advance made in Europe for a century past has been due to the theory and practice of freedom: intellectual advance, the advance in ideas, the advance in material wealth.

If Europe possessed such great wealth before the war, if her influence was so far flung, she owed

it in fact to her free institutions, to her practice of freedom alike in the political and economic sphere.

Even during the war, free peoples showed greater powers of resistance than those living under autocratic rule.

One after another the nations collapsed, because the door had been shut on freedom: Russia, Austria Hungary, finally, Germany.

There were, of course, a number of causes influencing the downfall of these nations. But what was the great argument used by the Entente to draw first Italy and then America into the war?

Did they not declare that German centralist policy meant the negation of freedom and the end of democracy? Would America—a decisive influence in the war—have taken part in the struggle if she had not thought that freedom was imperilled?

I recall Wilson's speeches and those of his principal colleagues when I first went to America, after the United States had declared war. If the iniquitous violation of Belgian soil by Germany was a weighty argument, the menace to the freedom of all European peoples was even more weighty.

How many times in the course of a conversation the question was asked: "Do you think that if, William II were victorious, he would impose his system everywhere? Do you think there would be an end of free government?"

But to-day, after we have fought in the name of

free institutions, after we have won the war in the name of freedom and with the help of free peoples, we see reactionary tendencies manifesting themselves amongst those same peoples, so that in some countries freedom has succumbed to the rule of a dictator, calling to mind remote civilisations and primitive races

IV

The growing causes of disorder

AFTER repeated triumphs for the Liberal ideal, we are at present witnessing a veritable crisis in the history of freedom—due now to revolutionary movements, like Bolshevism, now to reactionary and authoritarian movements, like Fascism and military dictatorships

Everywhere revolutionaries and reactionaries are at work. Henceforth the struggle will be between them, rather than between Liberals and the other parties

Where the war has given birth to nationalist tendencies, the labouring masses almost always respond by a revolutionary movement, or by a doctrinaire Socialism which often assumes Communistic forms. Where, on the other hand, internal distress or foreign influence gives rise to a revolutionary, Communist movement, the capitalist classes tend to respond by supporting and welcoming armed reaction, which, under diverse forms, is always of like origin.

The rule of freedom in modern nations is also the rule of national health. We must remember that after the war few peoples preserved their moral balance. We have been, and we shall long

continue to be, intoxicated with violence to a certain extent. Few European nations have preserved the wholesome principles of freedom.

Economic freedom has almost vanished, religious freedom is in peril in many countries, political freedom is at the mercy of daily crises. Europe is in process of disintegration. Day by day the tendency increases to split up, to break into a number of States, to impoverish ourselves by excessive Protection. Few countries possess a stable currency and many still consume more than they produce.

There is as yet no mutual confidence between the former belligerents. Everywhere there is unemployment, disordered currencies, the threat of fresh conflicts.

The victors feel little assurance that the vanquished are resigned to their fate; the vanquished have by no means accepted all the conditions imposed upon them with resignation. The result is a general atmosphere of suspicion.

One fundamental error has darkened the whole life of Europe: the attitude adopted towards Russia.

After the war the victorious States, seeing Poland's danger, thought it desirable to combat Bolshevism by every means in their power, and more especially by warlike measures.

Not only did they refuse to recognise the Moscow Government for a long time, but they tried to overthrow it.

After they had themselves attempted military operations, they aided and paid rebel armies. Some countries even erred so far as to recognise the insurrection as the legitimate government.

Later on they tried to isolate Russia economically.

No more disastrous policy could have been pursued. On the one hand, it lent to the Bolsheviks the national character of defenders of unity and of the Slav ideal, on the other hand, the workers throughout the world were justly incensed against this anti Russian policy.

Attacked by all the Governments of Europe, Bolshevism none the less won prestige with the proletariat which it did not deserve.

Bolshevism, for its part, met these attacks by essaying to turn the Russian revolution into a world revolution. It responded to acts of violence by still greater violence, straining its efforts to introduce Communism everywhere.

After several years of error, Europe has recognised the Moscow Government and abandoned all attacks. And the Moscow Government, for its part, is now persuaded that world revolution is unlikely. Little by little it has abandoned its presumptuous schemes.

But the poison engendered by these offensives has worked its way into the body politic of Europe and will not quickly disappear. In fact, every forward push of Bolshevism has produced militarist and nationalist movements, which, in turn, have

only served to increase the suspicions of the democratic and Socialist parties

Here is one of the chief causes of the sickness which has fallen upon the Liberal idea, and the difficulties against which all wholesome Liberal institutions are contending

Whatever we may think of the Peace Treaties, however favourable our verdict, we are compelled to admit that they have created a condition of instability and insecurity which makes life very difficult for Europe. There are areas whose fate will not be determined for many years to come. Perhaps military occupation, indemnities, and Control Commissions were partly necessary. But no one dare assert that they make for the stability of Europe.

Before the war we had only one problem of Alsace Lorraine in Europe. Now, there are nine or ten at least.

Not only the Germans, but Hungarians, Bulgarians, and Russians formulate their claims.

Russia claims Eastern Galicia, and as soon as she can she will seek to recover Bessarabia. Likewise, the very day that she is in a position to wage war against Poland, and still more against Rumania, nothing can stop her.

Before the war there was only one Austria-Hungary, that is, only one State composed of several nationalities dominated by a central authority. To day, there are at least six or seven

Within each of the countries whose independence is guaranteed by the Peace Treaties the difficulties against which Liberal rule and a free life have to contend are in daily evidence

The example of Czecho-Slovakia is the most convincing of all. We find in this enlightened and advanced country peoples of different nationality and diverse origin—Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Hungarians, Slavs. But the Czechs propose to make a single nation of the territory—that is to say, to deprive the other peoples of their nationality. Whence they are obliged to maintain a strong army to stand against Germany and Hungary and to pursue a policy of coercion and centralisation. Sometimes they find themselves compelled to suppress local liberties and to impose their language, a Slav language, upon Hungarians of Turanian origin and Germans, whose race can boast of a highly developed civilisation.

Assuredly the Czechs are a most intelligent people, worthy of a great future. For the most part their leaders are zealous patriots with a strong sense of responsibility. But what a hard task is theirs! The English can tell how difficult it is to denationalise a people of divergent race and religion. The persistent and unceasing efforts of centuries did not succeed in breaking Irish resistance.

Strictly speaking, it is possible to denationalise peoples of a lower type of civilisation, but never peoples like the Hungarians and Germans

The difficulties are even greater in Poland, where the Polish race is either in a minority or in a small majority amidst Russians, Germans, and Jews, the latter still treated with unjust suspicion. Even in peace, Poland is really at war with Russia and Germany. In spite of the treaties, she is obliged to arm and frequently to suppress all freedom within her own borders.

In Greece, in Rumania, and in other countries, we find a similar state of affairs, though varying in degree. We cannot forget that Rumanian acts of violence in Bessarabia horrified the whole civilised world.

The sole guarantee of freedom, the sole true safeguard for the Treaties, is to be found in federal organisation. As against this, the tendency is all towards centralisation, and the struggle of race and nationality repeats and perpetuates the Austro-Hungarian error, which did so much to bring about the European War.

The need to preserve an unstable order requires large standing armies and large military credits. If that violates the spirit of democracy and turns the mass of the people to thoughts of revolution, the result is again to add to the general feeling of suspicion, to increase financial straits, and to prevent the economic recovery of those nations which suffered most from the war.

V

The crisis in the Liberal parties and its causes. Socialist action in relation to the menace to freedom

BECAUSE of this troubled atmosphere, because freedom and democracy are in peril, we see in all countries the establishment of conditions most favourable to the development of nationalism and reaction in the middle classes, of revolutionary Socialism and Communism in the working classes.

These opposing movements are due to the same disturbed atmosphere, and threaten to drag Europe into a series of revolutions and wars.

It will be readily admitted that, if the conditions necessary for a genuine and lasting peace were attained, these agitations, whether Red or White, would lose all significance.

If Socialism and nationalism are of little importance in America and Australia, it is chiefly because nobody regards war as possible. We may find there lofty forms of patriotism and great and powerful proletarian democracies, but we never find an anarchist who disowns his country or a nationalist professing hatred of other countries.

Long ago a profound French thinker, Proudhon, whose very paradoxes are interesting, proved scientifically that war bears in its womb the seeds

of revolution. We may add that revolutions almost always give birth to reaction.

The share of responsibility falling upon Socialism in this Liberal crisis is no light one. Socialist writers have too often and too strongly exaggerated the errors of Liberalism and the evils for which the system of economic freedom is accountable. Those pages of Marx which are full of sympathy for aristocracy and ancient conservatism were written only to add weight to his criticism of middle-class plutocracy.

Marx's doctrine of catastrophe is partly responsible for the fact that Socialism tends at times towards methods of violence. That explains why not only the Red revolution in Russia, but also the White reaction in Italy, was the work of former revolutionary Socialists, and why Fascists are for the most part children of the same revolutionary Socialism.

I know well enough that Marx also defended the principles of the French Revolution, which he regarded as an important step forward in the march of the proletariat. But I know, too, that in his view the principles of the French Revolution were only one stage in the proletarian revolution, and that he believed that the final catastrophic stage must be based upon the dictatorship of the proletariat.

In spite of the respect which we owe to a thinker so powerful and so lofty as Marx, we must acknow-

ledge that to day his doctrine has been refuted by scientific criticism, and that of his work but little remains

The theory of surplus value, the tendency of profits to diminish, the class struggle, and historical materialism are ideas now entirely rejected by critics

Marx saw nothing in the history of mankind, after the disappearance of primitive Communism, but a continuous struggle, passing from chattel slavery to wage slavery, and destined ultimately to lead mankind to Communism. It was something approaching a theological vision, and was largely due to the spirit of Judaism, that noble and tempestuous spirit which has contributed not a little in two thousand years to the unrest and sorrow of the world. But Marx's apocalyptic vision inevitably weakened the spirit of Liberalism and gave rise to a belief in violence, a worship of force, which is none the less force because it is used in the service of the proletariat

Socialist organisation, basing itself on the principle of the class struggle at home, has created a peculiar mentality which readily resorts to force. On the other hand, the political struggle, changing to an economic struggle, has caused the opponents to organise in parties based on class interests, so that they too have debased the broader and more universal ideal of politics

If Socialism has played a mighty part in raising

the working classes by uniting them, it is none the less true that it has detracted from every kind of idealism by its practical materialism

Socialism flounders for ever in the contradiction between helpless particularism and apocalyptic violence. By regarding Liberalism as an expression of middle class interests, it has in fact offended against the love of liberty, and the revolutionary vision, based upon the abolition of class, has helped not a little, through political quietism in the mass of the people, to cultivate the instincts of violence in their leaders

Marx's slogan, "Workers of the World, Unite!" far from being in effect a slogan of unity, has been at times a cause of dissension

Directly after the war a great spirit of violence breathed upon the Socialist parties, and Russian example and propaganda played no small part in causing this deplorable state of affairs. The Russian Communist experiment has unsettled the minds and deceived the consciences of many

I remember an excited meeting of the Italian Chamber of Deputies after the war, in which one of the most fiery Socialist deputies—not, however, one of the most intelligent—poured forth catastrophic theories and ideas, which were nothing but an endless accumulation of errors

I followed the debate from the Government front bench as Prime Minister. The memory of my economic studies and my reading of Socialist

literature got the better of me, and I could not refrain from interrupting

"No Socialist theorist ever said that neither Marx nor Engels "

The speaker had certainly never read either, and could not therefore understand me. But he replied with the assurance of ignorance

"We do not hold with German doctrines, but with the Russian Socialism of the Soviets "

Even if it is argued that wars are inevitable, it cannot be claimed that they are helpful in the diffusion of those moral principles upon which all society is based

It is not true that they teach disciplined habits or awaken a love of order. War accustoms us to violence, and rouses in the hearts of the masses the bitter passions which civilisation had subdued, if not destroyed

When wars were waged by small mercenary armies, they did not cause a serious disturbance of economic activities, nor did they cause permanent unrest in people's minds. But now that wars are waged by entire nations, people is at grips with people, and millions of combatants stand opposed to other millions, every war gives rise to veritable social catastrophes, and fosters the spirit of violence and the taste for an easy life and ill gotten wealth

The last great war was almost equally disastrous to all the belligerents, and though there was no precise equality, victors, vanquished, and even

neutrals all suffered profoundly. The war brought discord where hitherto there had been economic partnership; it caused revolutions, reactionary movements, dictatorships, internal disorders, deep distress, and perils to freedom formerly unknown.

VI

Nationalism as the negation of freedom and democracy

IN every country the war fostered nationalism, and created it where it had hitherto been absent

Nationalism is the inevitable consequence of revolutionary movements. It is an antidote, and itself becomes a menace, for nationalism in one country tends to awaken or create nationalism in all the surrounding countries. And rival nationalist movements cannot fail to provoke fresh hatred, and therefore fresh conflicts.

It is hard to say what, in fact, nationalism is. Although it already commands the services of clever writers and zealous propagandists, it does not yet possess any theorists.

More than any other creed, nationalism is a reactionary state of mind. In it we see all the heaven of past ideas and past errors, which we believed had vanished for all time. In it we rediscover all the seeds of violence, the spirit of reaction, anti-Semitism, xenophobia, and clericalism in its ancient forms.

Freedom and democracy represent the state of equilibrium in civilised societies. As against this, the attitude of mind of reactionaries and revolutionaries drives them to extremist theories.

It is wholly characteristic that Fascism and nationalism in Italy are largely the work of revolutionaries who, not long ago, disowned the family, their country, and the rights of property

Nationalism, then, is not a creed, but a state of mind. It is the exaltation of our country at the expense of other countries. It is a reversion to the past, alike in internal and international relations.

The love of country is sacred. The nation, seen as an historic growth and the essence of the fatherland, is a noble conception.

We cannot at the present stage of our civilisation imagine any development unless it be based upon the grouping which history has effected and the sentiments which we call national. All international activity, all collective co-operation between the peoples, assumes the existence of free and independent nations. Nationalists almost always evince the same tendency towards violence as revolutionary parties. Believing themselves to be identical with the nation, they aspire to impose a reactionary social system and denounce as anti-national all who are not willing to accept their dogmas.

The Nation State, as conceived by nationalism, is based upon suspicion of other peoples, and on a programme of force and the exaltation of war. It is not love of one's own country, but rather hatred of other countries. According to the nationalist view each Nation State, regarded as an

organism, can develop only at the expense of other nations. Nationalism is to the ideal of nationhood what bigotry is to religion—the degradation of a lofty idea.

Logically the nationalism of every people aims at hegemony over the other peoples. In every country the nationalists wish to dominate, and so nationalism almost everywhere becomes imperialism, to the detriment of the national ideal. It is no longer a question of the nation asserting itself, but of the State domineering.

Whither would nationalist programmes carry us?

If the Germans had been victorious and had annexed Belgium and a large area of French and Russian territory, they would not only have been obliged to pursue a militarist policy, but to crush all internal liberties in order to absorb the annexed territories. The same would hold good if the victorious French annexed the left bank of the Rhine, that is, eleven million Germans. France would enjoy no further peace—perhaps, indeed, no further freedom.

I will not discuss an Italian nationalist programme, which could only be directed against the French, the Germans, or the Slavs—that is, against vigorous peoples, impossible to absorb. The victorious nations would lose their own character in the attempt to assimilate heterogeneous elements.

Since a nationalist policy inevitably makes for war—I was almost about to say for a continuous

state of war—the Government is obliged to seek the support of the most reactionary influences, and of parasitical groups and classes, for its home policy.

German nationalism rested upon Prussian Junkerdom and upon the great armament firms, and it aimed at the organisation of Central Europe—that is to say, at forcible union with the Prussian State of diverse populations—in order to dominate the world.

French nationalism is a mediæval conception, based upon a monarchical and religious tradition, upon chauvinism and literary fanaticism. First and foremost, it is Royalist. But since it lacks any serious claimant to the throne in a country of subtle mentality, where blind adoration is rare, where the habit of laughing at exaggerated pretensions is widespread, and where all the possible claimants are negligible, French nationalism simply stands for an ill defined reactionary tendency.

Can anyone seriously believe that France would be happier and more powerful under a monarchy? The French frontiers march with those of the three most important monarchies still surviving in continental Europe: the Italian, the Belgian, and the Spanish. Are Italy, Belgium, and Spain better off than France?

Italian nationalism is intellectually contemptible, and altogether so small a thing that it hardly deserves comment. It is an imported product,

ill suited to the Italian character, and it has never formulated a single idea

Before and during the war the German people were blamed for their nationalism, and even more for the aspirations of their nationalists. But after the war the nationalist spirit spread in all directions—it was to a large extent the product of the war.

Every country which annexed territory of different nationality and language wants to carry out a programme of denationalisation. The Czechs aspire to dominate the Slovaks and to denationalise the Germans and Hungarians. The Rumanians seek to denationalise their Russian, Hungarian, and Bulgarian subjects, the Greeks want to denationalise a variety of races, the Poles want to denationalise the Russians and Germans, the Italians want to denationalise the Germans of the Upper Adige. These efforts are for the most part as violent as they are futile.

Each State is driven by nationalism to resort to vast armaments on the one hand, and on the other to protective tariffs.

As a result, the financial crisis shows no improvement, and the crisis in production and currency grows more acute. Though the vanquished have been disarmed, Europe has a million more men under arms than there were before the war. Fresh treaties of guarantee are being drawn up for signature. Nobody sees that the sole

guarantee is to be found in moral disarmament—that is, in putting an end to financial chauvinism.

Each nationalist movement deludes itself into the belief that it can carry on its activities without provoking reactions in other countries.

Nationalism—or, in other words, a permanent attitude of suspicion in one people toward others—cannot fail to evoke suspicion in all other peoples. It is natural that German nationalism should give rise to French nationalism, and that Polish nationalism should produce or augment a still more virulent Russian nationalism. If the Italians take up a nationalist attitude, it is clear that the French, the Germans, and the Slavs are obliged to follow in their footsteps.

Since Europe took to talking nationalism, all the peoples outside Europe have grown suspicious. They have shut their doors to emigration, they have placed restrictions upon the economic and political rights of foreigners. If all the peoples of the world are infected with the nationalist virus and close their frontiers, it is Europe, with her dense population and small area, who will suffer the most.

The nationalist idea has resulted in a type of protection different from the reasonable forms to which we were accustomed before the war—an intolerant type. Every petty industry asks for protection, simply because it is national. Every country aims at possessing its own national industry.

People speak with fervour of national grain, national products. I have even read in some paper—I do not remember which—that the aim of the Italian people must be to produce national bread from national grain.

With an increasing population, a small area, and in many places a climate unsuitable for corn-growing, it will be difficult for the Italians ever to accomplish that aim. But of what importance is an aim so ludicrous and petty?

It is not merely illogical but uneconomic. What is essential for the Italians is to produce such abundance and variety of goods that they can provide themselves in exchange with all the necessities of life.

There are very few countries in the world which, like the United States of America, Russia, and China, are vast enough to constitute their own markets and to live in isolation.

All other countries must live by exchange. There are nations, like Italy, in which nationalism is not merely wicked but stupid—and that is worse for the peoples than wickedness. Italy, more than any other country, suffers on account of nationalism, for she can live only by freedom and exchange, if she desires to be prosperous and strong, Italy must be Liberal and democratic. To-day she forms an immense group within the human race—more than forty-two millions, and nearly ten millions abroad. Her territory is so

limited, and in most parts of the peninsula agriculture has to contend with such great natural difficulties (*malaria, floods, irregularity of rainfall*), that she cannot live as a purely agricultural country. She must needs have extensive industries and a lively exchange of goods.

But Italy sees her already dense population increasing by nearly half a million a year. Her mineral wealth is scanty, the value of her colonies is only moderate, to say the least. They are in fact a liability, and we can hardly expect that they will develop and attract a stream of emigrants. To develop them we should need considerable capital, and even then the result would be negligible, especially in Libya.

In truth, Italy has greater need of freedom than any other large country in Continental Europe. To procure the most essential raw materials (at least a hundred kilograms of grain and food stuffs and fats for each inhabitant), the coal which is wholly lacking, the cotton, the fuel, the fodder, she must export both her manufactures and her surplus population. Thus free trade in goods and the mobility and freedom of labour are essential to her before all else.

Her prime concern should be the training of her workers, so as to make them dexterous and to turn unskilled into skilled labour. It is also important for her to make use of all her available water power and, by combating malaria,

expressed itself for the most part verbally in foreign policy (with the exception of certain flagrant blunders, such as the occupation of Corfu, the threat to Afghanistan, and acts of insolence towards disarmed Germany)

Nationalism, or rather direct attempts to aggrandise the State, has always been the essential policy of most despotic Governments

But they spoke in the name of a divine right, and conquest appeared to backward peoples as a means of increasing their wealth, for in all ages men have been faced with this problem—is it more profitable to produce wealth or to seize upon someone else's wealth?

As a rule, the second alternative has seemed the more profitable

Wars waged by small professional armies could go on for a long time without greatly disturbing the economic activities of the belligerent nations. The victor seized all the wealth of the vanquished, and often even his land and his person. Invaders became a ruling caste, soldiers became vassals. War almost always secured benefits for the victors. But modern wars, waged by whole nations, ruin victors and vanquished in almost equal degree. Even territorial aggrandisement, though we may admit it to be an historical or national necessity, hardly ever yields any advantage.

The greatest of the ancient Greek poets, Hesiod, wrote in those early days that it is better to wait

for justice and eschew violence. The son of Chronos, he said, had laid down this law. "The fishes, the wild beasts, and the birds devour one another, but the gods have made justice their gift to man, and of all things that are, justice is the best."

And Xenophon, himself a statesman, a man of letters, and a general, asked in his day whether war was a good thing. He wrote

"But, people will say, is war better for our finances than peace? To determine this point, I see no better guide than past history, if we turn to it, we shall learn that our public funds, which *once increased immensely in time of peace*, have been wholly exhausted by the war.

"If we glance at the present time, we shall readily convince ourselves that the war has cut off many sources of revenue, and has exhausted those which still remain, leaving a dead loss, while since the restoration of peace on the sea, these same revenues have increased, and our fellow citizens enjoy them in complete freedom. But, people will go on to say, if the Republic is challenged, do you claim that even then we ought to preserve peace? I would not say so, but I do boldly maintain that we shall far more readily chastise our enemies if we give no occasion for the accusation of injustice against us for then they will have no allies."

I am sure that the Italian nationalists have never

read Xenophon and have no knowledge whatever of Hesiod.

They confine themselves to a constant repetition of the same violent expressions in the same slovenly form.

In present-day Europe, packed with people who must live by exchange, the economic situation following a great war is general ruin: victors, vanquished, and neutrals, all are ruined.

Thus the idea of war as an economic undertaking is far removed from present-day realities. Besides, wars in the past, whatever their outcome, were held in check to some extent by the personal responsibility of those who caused them, and by the danger which they involved to the dynasties in the belligerent countries. But what can now restrain the parties who profess the nationalist faith?

They possess neither the halo of tradition nor the lustre of divine right.

All they possess is the literary fury of their journals, which usually seem to be written by intoxicated dervishes, and which, at least in Italy, often give occasion for doubts regarding the mental condition of their editors.

VII

Reaction in Europe and the Mediterranean fever of dictatorship

IN all the countries where nationalism exists it tends to make democratic monarchies despotic and to overthrow republican rule in favour of a popular militarist monarchy.

What chance of success have these movements aiming at monarchist restoration, or at the transformation of democratic into despotic monarchy?

The war caused a crisis in the history of monarchies; those which survived, as in Great Britain, Belgium, Holland, and the Scandinavian countries, have as a rule bravely accepted the situation. A few, as in Spain, turned towards reaction, and this serious blunder has endangered their very existence.

Whilst I was still a child, three empires occupied a great part of the earth: Russia, China, and Brazil. Now they have vanished. Not a single monarchy is left in the whole of America, and no one believes any longer that it would be possible to establish one. The British Dominions, with a superficial area far exceeding that of Europe, are all republican in character, and are to a great extent true workers' democracies.

When the war broke out in 1914 there were three continental empires in Europe Russia, Germany, and Austria Hungary

In the disrupted territories of these three great empires there are only republics to day

The monarchical system has disappeared from all the vanquished countries, only in Bulgaria it has held its own, and there the internal situation is very serious

When war was declared there were twenty one monarchies, including the four empires, and only three republics The population of the republics was in the proportion of 1 to 6 to that of the monarchies After the war the British Empire alone survived, and the number of monarchies was reduced to eleven as compared with sixteen republics The ratio was completely inverted, to day the population of the republics is in the proportion of 2 to 1 as compared with the monarchies This was an unprecedented constitutional change Moreover, we may predict that another war would be fatal to the last surviving monarchies

Can the monarchies be restored?

In the New World no one would think it possible

For Europe all prophecy is difficult, in view of the uncertainty and disorder which still prevail But we can declare without hesitation that in the two great industrial nations on the Continent

France and Germany, a reversion to monarchy is unlikely

In countries where there is a cultured and intelligent middle class, sudden reactionary movements are not possible. France is resolutely republican. Germany has, indeed, reactionary parties, but no return to monarchy is to be expected. We may consider the Weimar Constitution firmly established, and it is the most democratic Constitution in modern Europe. It unites with its other merits that of weakening the traditional particularism and fostering national consciousness. In Russia, whatever the vicissitudes of Bolshevism, whatever its unavoidable transformations and modifications, no one can seriously contemplate a return to the Tsarist regime, which was one of the most wicked and cruel tyrannies known to history.

One of the worst misdeeds of the Entente was its failure at once to understand the transformation that had taken place and its support of the men of the old regime and their ludicrous claims.

The attempts to restore the monarchy in Hungary are the only ones which have shown a certain stability, they were primarily expressions of dissatisfaction, of just dissatisfaction, on the part of a noble people, upon whom the Treaties had imposed the utmost injustice and foolish humiliations. But efforts to restore the monarchy made by corrupt members of a cynical aristocracy, who had fallen so low as to forge false money, were

reprobated in Europe and inflicted irremediable damage on the cause they wished to serve

Nevertheless, a "Mediterranean fever" of dictatorship has infected Europe. In various forms and for various reasons dictatorships have been established in all the Mediterranean countries Italy, Spain, Turkey, Greece. Each of these countries has in fact abolished its former Constitution and submitted to a particular type of dictatorship. Whatever their vicissitudes, these systems cannot by any possibility find imitators.

Turkey's experiment, however, deserves consideration. After three unsuccessful wars, after her power had been undermined, Turkey turned her face towards Asia and recovered her vigour, having escaped from all the European intrigues carried on in Constantinople. In her capital, Angora, which is poor and desolate and full of malaria, Turkey is far removed from European diplomacy, which has penned in Constantinople the most shameful pages of its history. Here is a movement akin to that of Soviet Russia, which, quitting Petrograd (or, as it is now called, Leningrad), recovered in Moscow all the vigour of the Slav tradition.

The disturbances in Greece offer nothing of interest, for they are due to disorders following her defeat in Asia Minor.

In Spain the military dictatorship is transitory and of no great importance. The opposing parties

failed to form a stable and durable Government. With the concurrence of several military chiefs, the sovereign abolished or in practice suspended the Constitution, without any genuine resistance by the people. This regime will probably meet with a speedy end, even more probably it will end with a revolt. At any rate, these events have had no political effect on Europe, where they were regarded without sympathy. They are the result of local conditions, they have compromised the monarchy seriously, and will in all likelihood drive Spain back to democracy, which will mean a national revival.

There are in Europe only two phenomena of importance which are a negation of freedom: Bolshevism in Russia and Fascism in Italy.

What characterises these two movements based on force is not merely the common origin of the men who are or have been attached to revolutionary Socialism, but also their common hatred of freedom and democracy.

In both movements minorities, taking advantage of the conditions created by the war, have imposed their rule by armed force, and now maintain their position by suppressing all freedom and proving their hatred and scorn of democratic organisation. But whatever misdeeds may be laid at its door, the Soviet Government is and remains an important fact in world history. The Italian reaction, on the contrary, is a mere incident to be recorded, for

no ideal inspires it and it rests upon nothing but violence

We must recognise that Bolshevism and even Fascism exercise a great fascination—the one over the working classes, the other in the ranks of reaction. For several years, perhaps because of the violent and unjust attacks made upon Soviet Russia by other Governments, the people everywhere showed sympathy with Bolshevism. Only a knowledge of the true facts checked this sympathy. Illusions regarding the activities of Communism have now vanished almost everywhere. Even Communist parties tend to loosen the ties which bind them to Moscow.

In contrast, the reactionaries almost everywhere evince the utmost good will towards Fascism. If an armed minority can seize the State machinery, alter the Constitution, suppress Socialism, and crush proletarian activities, then indeed Fascism is the simplest and most economical weapon of reaction. Instead of taking the workers by the hand and using the powers of persuasion, it is simpler to seize them by the throat. Instead of spreading orderly ideals by means of the Press and by wise propaganda, it is simpler and cheaper to impose order by force, castor oil, and armed bands.

But can it be that Fascism will find imitators and will make its way into other countries, or is it an accidental and local phenomenon?

VIII

The new type of reaction Fascism

It is my wish to speak calmly of Fascism, without regard to the errors attributed to it, and still less to the acts of violence and crimes of which it is accused. It is my wish to speak of it as a political fact, as a conception embodying the negation of freedom and democracy.

As I have said, Fascism in Italy was the work of the revolutionary Socialists, who, after opposing the war, were converted to its support as an extreme Radical movement, actually favourable to the cause of Socialism. The prime mover, Mussolini, had always, in his capacity as editor of *Avanti*, maintained the most extreme theories. At the beginning of the war he was a vehement supporter of neutrality, then he was converted to the support of the war. He took part in the "Red Week" in 1914—that is, in a proletarian revolutionary movement, Communist in character.

He had even put forward arguments to justify regicide (he said it must be regarded simply as an occupational risk), he had glorified anarchist assassination and even the throwing of bombs, and he had preached violent anti-militarism. In deed, in his view the most cruel anarchist assassina

tions were to be regarded as "the beginning of profound social changes"

He was accused of revolutionary activities, and even of having been involved in anarchist plots : accused the Socialists of not desiring the solution, and proclaimed himself a Communist and revolutionary Just before the march on Rome and his triumph, he was ready (he promised it without concealment) to take part in a revolutionary movement He had, and has always retained, a great admiration for Bolshevism, though he presents himself to the public as an adobe to Bolshevism He has never had the slightest respect for the law Law is for the weak Violence alone is the foundation of social relations and violence or White violence, no matter which : studies neither economics nor philosophy, but only reads popular books and sketches of his own brilliant career in a hasty fashion But, like all agitators, he gives himself the airs of a learned man, and this causes him to fall into gross errors in his speeches and to make the mistakes of an elementary school child

But he grew up among revolutionary agitators, and he has the true knack of speaking to the mob, he generally speaks very well, and always his line of argument is simple and striking

He often professes to interpret Sorel's ideas, and defended violence as a cause of social progress Actually, he only interprets his own temperament

—that of a bold adventurer, barren of ideas, having only the impulse and aspiration to conquer and domineer.

Fascism made its first public appearance in March 1919, supporting all the causes which to-day it disavows. Instead of the anti democratic, despotic principles which it now proclaims, Fascism then maintained extreme Radical principles: there was to be a national Constituent Assembly, which was understood to be the Italian section of a European revolutionary movement; the monarchy was to be abolished and the sovereignty of the people proclaimed, the Senate was to be abolished, together with every kind of artificial and arbitrary privilege; the secret police were to be abolished, as also all titles of rank and nobility; there was to be the widest liberty of conscience in religious matters; joint-stock companies were to be dissolved; all manner of speculation through the banks or on the Bourse was to be suppressed, returns of capital and income were to be required and large fortunes to be reduced, the land was to be made over to Peasant Co-operatives; secret diplomacy was to be stopped, and there was to be a Confederation of European States; and so on. It was a mild form of Collectivism, with the proclamation of extreme ideas, which easily united enthusiastic youths and war-time malcontents

{ Any paper appearing in Italy to-day and supporting the Fascist programme of 1919 would be

suppressed at once by the Fascist Government censorship, its contributors would be killed or marked down and persecuted as enemies of their country, as anti nationalists

During my period of office the Fascists vied with the extreme revolutionaries in encouraging and inciting strikes and stimulating the most violent movements. My Ministry was followed by one under Giolitti. I had always prevented the seizure of factories, sometimes even by means of harsh repressive measures, and the only attempt which succeeded, in Piedmont, came to nothing by reason of special circumstances. The invasion of the factories took place in 1920, under Giolitti's Ministry, and for some inexplicable reason it was allowed. Fascism encouraged and defended it. Mussolini even proposed to the Socialists that the occasion should be used to attempt a revolutionary outbreak, but his suggestion was not adopted. The fact is, Mussolini really wanted revolution, whilst the Socialists used it as a threat but did not want it.

Thus Fascism was in its origin a revolutionary movement. Later, moreover, Mussolini repeatedly reproached the Socialists because they did not follow his lead, but let the favourable moment pass.

There really was a favourable moment. In 1919, before the war time neurosis had passed, there actually was difficulty in the resumption of work, and the number of unemployed was large, espe-

cially in the lower middle class. At that time the illusion of the Russian Revolution held sway, and, moreover, discontent was widespread. At this difficult juncture I tried to adopt the most appropriate measures to prevent any revolutionary action. I had divided the forces of revolution by a boldly democratic policy. I had considerably increased the police force and the *gendarmérie*, I had put a check on the issue of paper money and had paved the way for a balanced Budget by bold taxation. But I had to grapple with all the extremist elements, and among the most violent were those attached to the Fascist organisation.

Mussolini, appearing as a revolutionary, had a great power of attraction. If, on the one hand, the Socialists disowned him because he had deserted them, he abused them for their incoherent ideas. His Communist origin taught him to hate liberal and democratic institutions. His temperament made him the apologist of violence. At the same time, the fact that he had advocated the war and taken part in it inflamed his national pride.

Moreover, it must be admitted that the conception of violence in social relations has always been the base of Mussolini's theories. He would have liked to do on behalf of Socialism what circumstances obliged him to do against it, and I sometimes wonder whether he is not homesick for his earlier ideas. What we must look for in him is not ideas—these have often changed and

will probably change again—but the temperament of a conqueror, an undisciplined and violent spirit of adventure

His admiration for Russian Bolshevism is sincere, and he often copies its methods, for it is the issue of a like conception of force

Even while Mussolini still adhered to Socialist theories and activities the Socialists alienated him little by little by speaking against him. That is how the conflict arose, and so Fascism organised, formed armed gangs, and became at once a revolutionary and an anti Socialist movement

The Italian Socialists were not dangerous. Almost always they were merely tiresome and annoying. They talked of revolution and they aspired to carry out a policy of reform. They stirred up senseless strikes. During and after the war their conduct was first and foremost inconsistent and rather absurd. They had in their ranks honourable and worthy men, but Socialist propaganda was noisy and incoherent, hopelessly ill adapted to succeed in any serious undertaking, perfectly adapted to prejudice and annoy. The cross-currents in the Socialist party made it primarily responsible for the state of mind which led to Fascism. The Socialists talked of a Republic and a Constituent Assembly without seriously desiring either. They never opposed political strikes. When I wanted to reduce the note circulation I even came across Socialists who were idiotic enough to advocate

inflation. They wanted to fix a legal price for bread, which would have meant certain bankruptcy for the State. I resigned upon this question, and after a ludicrous comedy the Socialists accepted the inevitable. They never seriously opposed Fascism, and often they showed cowardice. Even in the Chamber, after the elections of 1921, when a disastrous error and Giolitti's vulgarly selfish trick opened the doors to thirty-one Fascist deputies, behind whom there was not a single vote and who were elected solely because their names were included in the Government lists—even then one hundred and fourteen Socialist deputies had not the courage to take action. After the assassination of Matteotti, a most honourable and worthy young man, the Socialists dared do nothing but absent themselves from the Chamber—a dangerous measure, which could not but promote and strengthen the existing dictatorship.

If at the outset Fascism found a welcome, it was primarily because the Socialists earned general hostility. Their incoherent speeches wearied people, and their vulgar, noisy threats created prejudice.

Mussolini had appeared on the scene as a revolutionary, had declared for the abolition of the Army, for a Republic, for the land to the peasants, for the abolition of the banks and the Bourse, he suddenly realised, with his characteristic *flair* and understanding of the mob mind, that he must change his tune at once and exploit the hatred of

Socialism But right up to the seizure of Rome by his gangs, backed by the manufacturers, the landowners, and the most reactionary elements in the Army, he never wholly severed himself from the revolutionary movement Only afterwards did he resolve to support reaction

The manufacturers who had no confidence in the State, the landowners who wished to maintain their privileges, which were often without justification, the traders who were almost everywhere menaced by the development of Co operative Societies, timid and wavering citizens all these began to look upon Fascism as the antidote to Socialism

Little by little the strikes grew fewer, but the confusion in certain public services and the arrogance of certain Labour demonstrations angered the people, so that Fascist armed gangs went about in Red districts without meeting genuine resistance They attacked their opponents, forced castor oil down their throats, thrashed them, and broke into the co operative stores From 1912 and 1922 onwards the Government proved itself their accomplice

That is how Fascism, in spite of its origin, gradually and for internal reasons became a White Guard for the manufacturers, and especially for the landowners

In its final phases, before the march on Rome in the autumn of 1922, Fascism had already adopted

the character of a reactionary movement. The march on Rome was undertaken with the tacit consent of all reactionary elements and of part of the Army.

A fortnight earlier, in a speech at Udine, Mussolini deliberately proclaimed himself a Republican. But when, by un hoped for means, he had become the King's Prime Minister, his aims underwent a transformation.

Having no theory of its own, after its union with the Nationalists, who were weak in numbers but intemperate and inclined towards every kind of excess, Fascism stressed its anti democratic and anti Liberal character. There had not been, and there could not be a Fascist revolution, there was simply the acceptance by the powers of the State of a reactionary movement. Having laid hands upon the powers of the State, the Fascist leader, who but yesterday was a revolutionary, suddenly announced his boundless scorn for freedom, which he called a putrefying corpse, and adopted a programme in direct contradiction with his original aims.

In presenting himself before Parliament, Mussolini, the head of the Government, said that he might have made a camp for his Fascist troops of the lifeless and muffled Chamber, and that he might have occupied it for two months or two years, according to its behaviour. But not a voice was raised in protest at Montecitorio. It

was a sad and humiliating spectacle. Not only did Mussolini proclaim the dictatorship and abolish parliamentary institutions and all public liberties in effect by his scornful words, but he also suppressed the Constitution.

Indeed, freedom was almost completely destroyed, step by step.

Any negation of freedom results in its gradual reduction. Any reactionary policy leads to increasing demands from the reactionary parties.

At the outset the Conservative parties collaborated with Fascism, then it separated from them also. Fascism became intransigent, it could not do otherwise. It did not and could not recognise any other party. That is why it found itself at enmity not only with the Socialists, but with the Democrats, the Liberals, and finally even with the Right wing Conservatives.

The Senate, nominated by the King, is the only surviving assembly in a great state which takes the form of a Second Chamber exclusively nominated by the Government, it has never been of importance in Italian politics—to day its importance is less than ever.

The Chamber of Deputies, elected by universal suffrage, represented the vital forces in the nation, it has been practically abolished. The elections held in 1924, under the Fascist Government, were more in the nature of nominations. The deputies were designated in the presence of a Government

Commission, and the electoral meetings were so arranged that they merely sanctioned the will of the Government.

It was hardly anywhere possible, except in the large towns, for the opponents of the Government even to vote. The Fascists tampered with the lists as much as they chose, and the same individuals voted forty, fifty, sixty times with different ballot-papers.

One of my friends, an old man, who presided at a polling-station, could not prevent Fascist acts of violence. But when he saw a young man under twenty in a black shirt, who had voted more than forty times with different ballot-papers and was finally voting with one belonging to an old man of eighty, he had to content himself with a smile of ironic benevolence, saying:

"I must congratulate you. You have kept marvellously fit. You do not look in the least like a man a good deal older than myself."

The present Parliament can only be regarded as a comedy in the midst of the Italian tragedy.

On November 9, 1926, a Bill was passed depriving a hundred and twenty deputies of their seats. The excuse is that, since they accused Mussolini of having had Deputy Matteotti murdered, they have not attended the meetings of the Chamber. But the excuse was absurd, for among those deprived of their seats were deputies

who had attended but had spoken and voted against the Government.

Some time ago a deputy was deprived of Italian citizenship, and consequently of his seat, by a mere decree.

In consequence of another ludicrous Act, which stands alone in the whole world, the Government can deprive of Italian citizenship those of their opponents who have gone abroad to escape death and the persecutions of Fascist gangs, and can confiscate their property.

In reality the Chamber of Deputies no longer exists. From time to time it meets for two or three days, and approves, at a single sitting, of what the Fascist Government proposes, even of the death penalty for opponents.

The Senate has never been very important in Italy. It is nominated by Government decree, and by now it is almost entirely Fascist. Such Senators as remain in opposition, men of great dignity, like Count Sforza, the historian Ruffini, Albertini, the former proprietor and editor of the great Italian Conservative paper, the *Corriere della Sera*, and many more of the most honourable citizens, live under threat of assassination and have no sort of power or influence.

The Fascists now say that the Chamber of Deputies must be abolished and the Senate transformed into a Council of Fascist Corporations. Formal abolition may come about—it will be

of no importance: in reality it has already happened

But the suppression of Parliament brought in its train the suppression of local liberties. Almost all the Municipal Councils in Italy were dissolved and taken over by the Fascists. In other words, local government representatives are no longer chosen by the electors, they are nominated from the capital. In the large towns the Government appoints Royal Commissioners to administer municipalities and provinces. Finally, this system was legalised by the introduction of an ancient Austrian institution, the Podesta—that is to say, a Government representative to administer the municipalities. For the most part the Podestas are not administrators but agitators, men of violence, sometimes even men who have been sentenced for offences against the common law. Public opinion has come to be treated with such contempt that the men selected are often utterly unworthy.

The unavoidable result of suppressing elected representatives was the suppression of all freedom of meeting and association. Election meetings and others on the part of the Opposition are forbidden, even when lawful; so also are all associations of students, of workers, and even of ex-combatants and disabled men. The mere fact of expressing opposition to the Government has become a motive for persecution.

Under such a system freedom of the Press is impossible

It was suspended in fact even before it was legally abolished, which happened later. Many journals and many journalists have been attacked—even monarchists and Conservatives. A few journals have had their premises sacked. Then the movement of suppression was legalised. Censorship was introduced, and then the right of sequestration and suppression. Many of the great Conservative and Liberal papers were subjected to daily sequestration—that is to say, they were practically driven into bankruptcy. Some of the largest were suspended for months together on the most trivial pretexts. Finally they had to give in. Either they were bought by business men who stood for Fascism or else they disappeared. Then, since the authors' and journalists' associations showed hostility, they were dissolved, and they too were put under Royal Commissioners. Indeed, the journalist's profession and the publication of newspapers are now subject to forms of control unknown even in the most despotic countries.

On October 28, 1926, it became known that Mussolini's assassination had been attempted at Bologna. This assassination has always been a mystery, for it was supposed to be the work of a boy of fifteen, himself a Fascist and belonging to an exclusively Fascist family. According to the Fascist papers (which published the news with the

censor's authority), Mussolini gave the order to lynch and kill the youth. He was killed on the spot. Nothing of the kind has ever been witnessed even in Russia on the occasion of the most horrible attempts on the life of the Tsar or Grand Dukes! No man has even been lynched at the command of the Tsar! But in Italy a child was lynched, who in all probability had not even committed the crime! On his poor body fifteen dagger marks were found, proving that the dagger, prohibited by law in Italy, is still the favourite weapon of the Fascists!

The next day all journals not exclusively Fascist were suspended without any reason whatever—that is, the only journals that the public liked.

There were no journals opposed to Fascism, none even which could voice any criticism. But these had retained a certain degree of independence, and the public, which dislikes the fanaticism and violence of the Fascist Press, preferred them. A certain number had their premises sacked, others were suspended. It is now almost useless to read the Italian Press. Nothing of interest is published. All the papers are alike, print the same news and say the same things. The Press does not mention Italian affairs, unless to glorify Mussolini and Fascism. The circulation of the papers has fallen rapidly in proportion to their zeal for Fascism.

Once the Co operative Societies had been fettered and the free associations of workers crushed, the

workers and peasants were obliged to join the Fascist unions.

As the civil servants and justices did not accept the Fascist regime, or accepted it reluctantly, and retained their own liberty of opinion, the Government reserved the right to punish and dismiss those whose views differed from its own, or whose attitude towards it was unfavourable. To-day a magistrate may be dismissed—a thing which was unknown in Italy, even under the Bourbons—merely because he shows an attitude of mind unfavourable to Fascism.

But much more was done. Even under the rule of absolute monarchy, the legal profession was free. The Bourbons of Naples gloried in the fact their judges were independent and their barristers free.

It is now established by law in Italy that anti-nationalists, that is, opponents of Fascism—Socialists, Republicans, even democrats or Liberals—may not exercise the profession of a barrister, and their names must be erased from the lists in every court and every tribunal.

✓ In truth, Fascist legislation stands alone in the modern world.

The Act of November 24, 1925, gives the Government the right, as we have seen, to dismiss any civil servant, and even any magistrate, who regards the Fascist Government with disfavour. The Act of November 25, 1925, practically pro-

hibits Freemasonry, or any non Fascist association. The Act of December 31, 1925, gives the Government the right to enact laws by simple decree. Another Act of the same date gives the Government the right to do what it likes with the Press—not merely to exercise censorship but to suspend and suppress. The Act of February 4, 1926, actually abolishes all Municipal Councils and suppresses all local liberties. Every town is administered by a Fascist official, whose word is law.

The Act of December 25, 1925, decrees that anyone causing offence to the head of the Government by his words or his actions is liable to a heavy fine and imprisonment for a period from six to thirty months. In practice hundreds of people are sent to prison every day, simply because they uttered the least criticism of Fascism or Mussolini.

Foreigners who go to Italy and stay in the large hotels are surprised that no one criticises Mussolini, and, after admiring the appearance of order, they repeat the statement that Fascism has re-established order in Italy. What kind of order?

Order is permanent only if it is rooted in men's conscience, and there is no order without freedom. The list of Fascist laws destructive of freedom, violations of the conscience of mankind and of true social order, is, as we have said, very long, it is useless to recapitulate.

1 But even more than its laws Fascist practice is

a negation of civil life. Citizens no longer enjoy even the right of *habeas corpus*. At the will of Fascist leaders they are insulted, outraged, assassinated, and no legal proceedings follow. If sometimes there is a pretence of legal proceedings, it is a mere laughing-stock: we have often seen crime glorified in the most deplorable manner.

✓ Fascist laws are such that to apply them is to commit acts of violence.

• The most hateful law, one which surpasses in cruelty and stupidity anything done by the most violent and criminal of Governments, is the National Defence Act, repeated in the Public Safety Act of November 6, 1926.

We have seen that, as a result of Fascist laws, an opponent of the regime has neither judge nor barrister. Even if he does find a barrister and an honest judge who resists pressure, and if he is acquitted, he is not yet safe. He is always in danger, and whoever he is—Liberal, Conservative, Catholic, Socialist—he is in the power of a Government and its supporters who can ruin him at any time.

The Act of November 6, 1926, decrees in Clause 184 that every Italian citizen may be deported if he has committed, or *shown intention to commit*, acts directed against public order, social, national, or economic; acts liable to endanger the State; or even if he is simply opposed to the actions of the State authorities.

Clause 185 decrees that the period of deportation may vary from one to five years, and that the guilty person may be sent to a part of Italy other than his own home, or even to a colony

✓ By these regulations the Government holds the life, fortune, and honour of every citizen in the hollow of its hand. Without legal proceedings, without opposition, without a court of law, without defence, any citizen who is not a Fascist may be deported

Persons are deported as a rule to some small village on one of the volcanic islands surrounding Italy, or to the poverty stricken African colonies belonging to Italy. Most of them are distinguished men. They receive three or four lire a day, which is just enough to keep them from starvation. Their families, however, robbed of their head, may starve if they choose

How many Italian citizens have been deported?

It is hard to say, for the Fascist Government prevents any information on the subject from appearing in the Press. The Government acknowledged that the first batch consisted of 522 persons sent to places of detention. In a later publication the number was said to be nearly 1,000. But in Italy the word goes round that there are nearly 10,000

Who are these deportees? The most highly respected men in Italy, lofty characters, authors of high intellect, professors, barristers, and a large

number of workers. They even include former Ministers of the Crown!

The deported Members of Parliament number at least forty, and there are among them Liberals, Conservatives, and even six Catholic members and a large number of Catholic priests. Though Fascism proclaims itself to be nationalist and Catholic, it hates with special bitterness the opposition which comes from Catholic quarters, and the persecution of Catholics is often the most cruel of all. In all parts, it is said, priests have been flogged, beaten, and even killed, and *not once* have the criminals been brought to serious justice!

Nothing free is left in Italy. The people see penury increase and freedom wholly absent, but they cannot revolt because the Fascist troops are heavily armed and the mob has no arms. But the deepest hatred exists, and, indeed, forcible resistance is suggested on all sides.

Police regulations are almost laughable. House porters are compelled to become police spies. Every Italian citizen must have an identity card, just as if he were a foreigner.

Under such conditions treachery, espionage, and accusations cannot but abound. No one dare speak against the dictatorship, but all loathe it.

In order to have an excuse for acts of violence, a series of attempts on Mussolini's life have been trumped up. Every such crime, committed or intended, has been acknowledged during the trial

or in publications appearing in France to be an invention of the Italian Fascist police

✓ In almost every country Fascism possesses not merely propagandists to deal with the Press, but spies, *agents provocateurs*, and even criminals for purposes of intimidation. Large sums are expended on these international activities

It is no longer possible even to quit Italy, unless one is friendly to the Fascists. It is said, indeed, that opponents are kept as hostages. When Fascism feels that the game is up, or merely that its power is in danger, these opponents will be held responsible, and will very likely be massacred.

Matters have come to such a pass that professors, barristers, and journalists, whose only crime was helping one of the persecuted political leaders to escape across the frontier, have been deported. Yet no sentence had been passed on the fugitives—indeed, they were among the most highly respected men in Italy.

This moral coercion, these persecutions, these torments, have robbed Italy of all her gaiety—no one smiles now in Italy. There are men who utter threats and men who are threatened. The Fascists are divided between them. The most ignorant men hold the highest offices of State, and every adventurer thinks he has the right to demand what he will. Men unqualified for the simplest duties are placed in positions requiring

the utmost tact, and there are among them men of doubtful character, and even criminals

A people of forty millions is governed by an armed minority. No opposing views are tolerated. Life is not only hard, for free men it is full of dangers and monotony. No activities of a lofty nature are possible.

Nothing commands respect, neither science, nor fame, nor high character.

Force is believed to override all rights. And when Mussolini, who has never studied philosophy, speaks to foreign journalists, who are even less philosophers than he, he loves to coin a sort of theory of force, which is the negation of democracy and freedom.

He does not stop to inquire what the consequences of his theory will be. If we, in our turn, had acted on it before him, he would still be an obscure workman in his village or an unfortunate propagandist, moving from one prison to another.

To the Fascist mind force endows with rights, and the rights conferred by force allow of the breach of all promises.

✓ Fascism does not even honour its financial engagements.

Italian manufacturers raised loans in America in order to command sound money and buy raw materials. A decree of February 10, 1926, required these manufacturers to hand over their borrowed dollars and other foreign currency to the Govern

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ment Thus the manufacturers received lire instead of dollars or other stable money

There were more than 21 milliards in one year, five year, and seven year Treasury bonds By a simple decree at the end of 1926 the Government ordered that they should be compulsorily converted into funded debt, it also decreed a further issue of funded debt, compelling the banks and the credit and savings institutions to subscribe half their available funds

But that involved disaster The new funded debt was issued at $87\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, but the announcement that the Government was not meeting its obligations, and that subscription was compulsory, destroyed all confidence The funded debt, which had touched 97 and had remained stable above 88, fell immediately to 78, and even lower Those who were required to buy the new issue at $87\frac{1}{2}$ found themselves in the absurd position of being able to buy the very same on the Bourse much below 80 But as everybody was selling and nobody was willing to buy, the Government announced that it regarded the sellers as enemies, and that their names would be published That, in Fascist language, meant that on the morrow the most outrageous persecutions would follow

But what was the result?

The new issue, in spite of threats and intimidation and all kinds of moral pressure, hardly exceeded three milliards

To appreciate this immense failure, which is the forerunner of financial collapse, we must consider previous loans

In 1919 Nitti, as Minister of Finance after the military disaster of Caporetto, raised a loan of 6 245 milliards to cover the cost of resistance in the most serious circumstances. And at that time the dollar, which is now worth more than 23 lire (a purely artificial rate) stood at 6 34. This same Nitti, as Prime Minister in 1920, raised a loan at 87½ to liquidate war expenditure and avoid inflation, and this loan realised 21 milliard lire. With the lire at the value at which it then stood, this represents a splendid effort on the part of the whole people, bearing witness to their confidence.

The word "credit" is derived from the Latin *credere*, to believe. To grant credits we must feel confidence, and the Italian public to day feels no confidence in the methods of Fascism—least of all in its financial policy.

This insane finance has reduced the Bourse to confusion. The Fascists say (and their newspapers repeat it), in the most exaggerated Bolsheviki manner, that the source of their difficulties is to be found in Jewish and *international high finance*. Fascist journals speak of financiers as brigands. Italy has never been troubled with anti-Semitism. Before Fascism arrived it was so tolerant a country that Jews could occupy the most confidential positions as well as the highest public offices. It

even happened—and it was the sole example in Europe—that a Jew held office in one of my Cabinets as Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Worship in a Catholic country. Now we see anti Semitism making its appearance, together with intolerance and the most odious activities.

Fascist journals write in all seriousness that no one has the right to think. Italy must have one head only. Mussolini.

Recently we have witnessed the persecution of intellectuals. The greatest of Italian thinkers, such as Benedetto Croce, a former Minister of Education, a Senator, and one of the greatest of modern philosophers, has seen his house attacked and has himself been insulted. The same thing happened to Roberto Bracco, the greatest dramatist of modern Italy, and to the most highly respected Conservative and Catholic deputies. University professors are frequently insulted, and if they are not Fascists they are dismissed, learned men are persecuted as they were in the worst days of Tsarist Russia.

Those who attract the bitterest animosity are the moderate men—Conservatives and Liberals who have held aloof from Fascism because they respect freedom. Acts of violence were first committed against me, they were continued against a large number of respected politicians. The worst sufferer is Count Sforza, a Senator, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Ambassador in

Paris His house was pillaged, revolver shots were fired close to his wife, and he himself was wounded

His sole crime was that he had not given his adherence to Fascism, and as he is the friend and has been the guest of several European sovereigns and is on good terms with the most distinguished statesmen, it is to be supposed that his dislike of Fascism, even if he keeps silence, is dangerous

Violence always engenders violence, and suspicion always engenders suspicion

✓Fascism justified all its initial acts of violence on the pretext that it had to combat the Communists There never was a serious Communist menace in Italy, but the comfortable classes treated Fascist methods with indulgence There followed the struggle against the most moderate Socialists It was said to be a Conservative policy, but later the democrats, the Liberals, and especially the Catholics, were subject to the severest persecution

Now Mussolini causes his Press to announce that, with all opposition suppressed, the danger is within the ranks of Fascism itself—for not all Fascists are sincere

Mussolini mistrusts his friends particularly, and himself occupies all posts of high responsibility He is now (1) Prime Minister, (2) Minister of Foreign Affairs, (3) Minister of the Interior, (4) Secretary for War, (5) Minister of Marine,

(6) Air Minister, (7) Minister of Corporations, (8) Chief of the Fascist Grand Council, which is the true seat of authority since Parliament was abolished, (9) Commander-in-Chief of the Fascist National Militia, that is, the armed troop which is paid by the State but owes service to Fascism.

I have been a member of the Government for long periods and I have occupied various ministries. When I have been obliged temporarily to fill a second office I have been so overwhelmed with work that I had not a free moment. And I must say, without false modesty, that I have spent my whole life in political and administrative studies. Mussolini never studied anything and has come from the work of revolution and revolutionary agitation. With what can he busy himself?

Actually he no longer controls anything except the Fascist organisation.

But all these offices concentrated in a single man involve in fact far more absolute power than that of the most absolute king. Italy has a population of more than forty millions; Fascism has only Mussolini! And what will be the effect of each day that this state of affairs lasts on the condition of Italy after Mussolini?

Even the policy pursued towards the working classes was needlessly brutal. Everywhere there were martyrs and victims of persecution. The workers are no longer free to form associations ~~that are not Fascist~~.

Almost all free workers' associations have been suppressed, and the so-called Fascist corporative State has been established, with ludicrous regulations—a sort of compromise between the Middle Ages and the regimentation of Tsarist Russia

Fascism has aspired to make all social classes its dependents—to group all Italians in paradoxically absurd syndicates and corporations. That is the great Fascist programme of reform

What constitutes this programme?

An Act was passed on April 3, 1925, and regulations followed on May 19, 1926. These settled the whole affair

All producers and employers on the one hand, all workers on the other, besides all merchants and professional persons, are required to form syndicates and corporations. Artisans and labourers are compelled to pay over part of their wages for the maintenance of these corporations, at the head of which is a Minister of Corporations. As regards money contributions, membership is compulsory. It is restricted by rules as regards trade union organisation

✓ In order to belong to a trade union and share in its organisation the worker or peasant must, according to Clause 1 of the regulations, be of good moral and *political* behaviour from the national point of view. That is, he must be a Fascist, for in fact the Fascist Government brands as anti-national all who are not Fascists

—not only Socialists, Catholics of the Popular party, and republicans, but even Democrats and Liberals.

Thus the workers will be forced to pay hundreds of millions from their wages, which are already greatly reduced in Italy, and tend to fall still lower. The money so collected is not intended solely for the benefit of the artisans and labourers, but also for the Fascist organisations.

Thus there is a purely Fascist enterprise known as the *Opera razionale Balilla*. Its object is the military organisation, on Fascist lines, of all children between ten and twelve. The workers are compelled to contribute to this organisation; even for those who are not enrolled in the unions it is obligatory. Subscriptions are demanded like taxes, by the officials of the Finance Department.

Contributions, therefore, are demanded even from those who do not want to join the unions. The duty of paying falls upon all; but the right of belonging to the unions is restricted, in reality, to Fascists.

By Clauses 4 and 7 of the Act one of the indispensable conditions for admission is "*good moral and political behaviour from the national point of view.*"

The report presented to Parliament read: "These conditions ensure beyond a doubt that persons whose reliability in national matters is *uncertain* can neither join the union nor remain within it. The presence of members of partisan unions will

automatically become impossible in a legally constituted union "

There is only one reservation "Workers or artists enrolled in associations of a purely spiritual and religious character may be admitted to membership of the official unions, and may remain within them so long as, both within the union and outside, their actions are in conformity with the principles of discipline and national order "

That means that workers, and indeed barristers or engineers, may only belong to religious organisations But if they belong to any non Fascist political organisation whatsoever, they must pay, even for purely Fascist objects, and apply their earnings to the support of Fascist organisations

Such unparalleled coercion (nothing of the kind has ever been known either in Austria Hungary or even in Tsarist Russia) results in a continual atmosphere of revolt among the workers, and, worse still, obliges them to lie

Certain large manufacturers in Italy, including the largest of all, the Fiat motors, had almost exclusively Socialist workers in their employ Elections for the Works Councils always gave a majority to the Socialists and the most progressive parties How would these workers be situated? They must pay compulsory contributions to the Fascist unions, but they cannot join They must contribute, by means of a levy on their wages, to the upkeep of Fascist organisations—even

to military organisations for the young, like the *Balilla*, which stand for all that they most abhor.

The syndical associations unite all producers, all the workers, into compulsory unions; they are organised in larger unions, federations, and confederations.

The employers are required to form five general confederations—for industry, agriculture, commerce, transport by land and sea, and lastly banking.

The workers are required to form three confederations—for industry, commerce, transport by sea and air, transport by land, and banking.

But there are to be also professional confederations—doctors, lawyers, engineers, and so on; for artists, painters, sculptors, architects, etc.; finally, for handicrafts.

Thus everybody must be herded into a union and a federation, and if he desires to share the benefits of the association, he must needs hold the same political faith—that is, he must act and vote in the same way on pain of expulsion (which, however, does not free him from the obligation of paying his contributions).

No collective agreements except through the corporations; no strikes; no individual labour contracts. All the associations, backed by their whole financial power, visit with their displeasure any offender against the established rules.

There are complicated schemes to regulate every action, every movement, every stirring of initiative. There are special benches of magistrates, but in certain cases also the regular magistrates may step in.

This organisation necessarily culminates in a Minister of Corporations, who will in time regiment the whole life of the nation.

Whither will this unprecedented system of coercion lead us?

These vast groupings, which are not formed to pursue a common ideal, where will they end? Must not the present servitude pave the way for disaster? Will not all these men, united by compulsion, form the revolutionary army of to-morrow? The Fascist chiefs who lead them were revolutionaries until yesterday. Will they not, when difficulties arise, revert to their former ideas and habits?

People speak of the State. But what is the State? At the present time, in Italy, it is simply Mussolini's person and the persons of one or two of his friends or partisans.

What will the State of to-morrow be? What will be the results of this compulsory union? And of a policy which makes everything depend upon a single man, or on a small group of men? Must we not fear a dangerous reaction? And must not decadence be the inevitable result of the suppression of all freedom and all individual

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initiative, not only in politics, but in economic affairs ?

When Signor Mussolini announced the rules of the unions and corporations he desired to issue a proud and high sounding manifesto .

“ There is an end of the democratic, agnostic, and imbecile State

“ In its place the Fascist State is born

“ For the first time in the history of the world a constructive revolution like ours accomplishes peacefully, in the sphere of labour and production, the organisation of all the economic and intellectual forces of the nation in order to direct their use for a common aim For the first time a permanent system is established of fifteen great associations on a footing of equality, all alike recognised by the State and secure in such of their interests as are legitimate and do not conflict with those of the sovereign State ”

It is not hard to foresee the effect of this reform But neither is it hard to foresee that it will find no imitators

At present all really free association is forbidden in practice

After the persecution of the Socialist organisations there followed persecution of the Catholic Populist organisations, and then of Liberal organisations Finally, on the pretext of putting a stop to secret associations, Freemasonry was suppressed in effect Civil servants are not to-day allowed to

be Freemasons, and nearly all Freemasons' Lodges in Italy have been destroyed

Let me add that the authors of these acts of destruction and aggression are hardly ever punished, or else they are exempted from punishment by successive amnesties

In order to maintain its organisation Fascism has been obliged, not only to abolish all liberties and all local self government step by step, but also to govern by decree and to impose a discipline based on force and not on free consent. It has been obliged to form a militia, paid by the State but serving the Fascist party

There is nothing upon which absolute authority can be based except religious and priestly education. ✓ Fascism has introduced compulsory religious teaching and has sought to conclude an agreement with the Church. But the Catholic Church is first and foremost a great religious institution, and her activities are primarily religious and moral, and only political in a secondary degree, at least as far as her supreme leaders are concerned, she has shown no sympathy whatever with Fascism. On the contrary, she has solemnly repudiated nationalism, which is the sole theoretical foundation of Fascism

The Church, with her vast spiritual power, seeks to draw the mass of the people to herself, and she cannot approve any governmental action based on violence and directed against the mass of the people

All reactionary parties in Catholic countries harbour the illusion that the Church can help them in the work of reaction. But the Church has seen all great schisms throughout the centuries created by despotic Governments, she realises fully the importance of the popular franchise for her own development, and is sincerely opposed to all movements against the people and all the works of reaction. She knows that there is nothing positive in this policy, and that reactionary rule always brings revolution in its train, just as dictatorship always brings war.

Any unnecessary restriction of liberty produces fresh restrictions. We have come to a point when the Fascist Government declares that it stands for the nation and regards as anti-national those who, though they are merely democrats, Liberals, or Conservatives, work in the parties opposed to Fascism. Already the State and the nation are confused, as happens with despotic governments. Indeed, the process has gone further—a party and the nation are confused.

The Fascist chief has expounded his view on several occasions. He thinks that all national forces, in politics, industry, commerce, the Universities, education, the banks, and the Army, must be subject to the same discipline, follow the same leader, and consequently act with the same single purpose under Government control.

Were not these the words and theories of

William II? Does it not involve a return to the Middle Ages to discuss seriously the right of imposing identical opinions?

Under despotic governments, like that of William II, it came to be said that Socialism meant disorder and peril, that a choice must be made between the Bible, disorder, and Socialism (*Babel, Bebel, Bibel*), but no one dared to destroy the fundamental principles of modern civilisation.

Mussolini is the first to declare that a government—his Government—stands for the total negation of the principles of democracy, freedom, and peace.

"We stand for a new principle in the world," he said. "We stand for the clear, categorical, and definite negation of the world of democracy, of plutocracy, of Freemasonry—in a word, for the whole world of the immortal principles of 1789."

William II uttered threats. Mussolini, though he disposes of far smaller forces, also utters threats.

"We have three million men ready to fight on the north or the south," he declared.

As William II aspired to rule the seas, so Mussolini repeats that the Mediterranean must be a Roman lake. But many nations live on the Mediterranean. First and foremost, there are France and England. Can they resign themselves, without a war, to see the Mediterranean become a Roman lake?

But what is meant by a negation of the principles

of 1789? They are essentially the same as those of the American Constitution of 1787: they are the foundation-stone of modern civilisation. Either we must adopt these principles or else return to barbarism—to the principles which ruled before the era of civilisation. Either a free government chosen by the majority, or a despotic government in which a single man holds all the power and everyone else obeys.

No head of a government, no chief of State, before Mussolini, ever denied the principles on which all modern democracies are founded. Nobody had ever criticised the noble acquisition of the rights of man. This negation is not a theory—still less is it progress; it is an attempt to revert to the past, the moral code of force, the principle of dictatorship; it can result only in oppression and war.

In despotic governments and those based on divine right blind obedience is justified by the divine source of authority. But can blind obedience be shown to men who merely speak for a party, when their party of to-day advocates the destruction of their party of yesterday? What becomes of the majesty of monarchies by right divine, which did at least command the respect of the ignorant masses by reason of their origin? The earlier absolutism found its justification within itself; the new type seeks it in force.

¹At bottom Fascism is only a temporary expedient

of the reaction. The Fascist march on Rome was not, as the Fascists claim, a revolution, but simply a discovery. It showed that Italy had not forgotten her ancient power, nor the mediæval spirit of adventure, nor the tyrannies of social life. It is a reversion to the past in a most unexpected but most comprehensible form.

IX

Fascism regarded as White Bolshevism, and the perils which menace peace

✓FASCISM, then, is without a theory; it is an adventure, a movement which unites men of all parties; but in absorbing nationalism it has picked up certain sterile and dangerous formulæ concerning military power, imperialism, and expansion. The Fascists call their leader the Duce. In their methods of government they have adopted principles and views altogether contrary to their initial programme, which are found in no other civilised country. One law confers on the head of the Government, the Duce, honours and dignity attributed to no other ruler in the world, and any insult to him is punished—as we have already said—by special courts, as *lèse-majesté*.

Fascism has no ideal but that of the Nation-State, which has inevitably led to an imperialist policy. Indeed, Fascism has proclaimed its imperialist character, which is contrary to its original principles. But one cannot be an imperialist if one has no empire, and empire means territory. Yet what wars can Italy usefully wage, and, now that the whole world is occupied, which empires can she rob to constitute her own?

If nothing is intended but a verbal form, then that is based on a confusion of terms and may constitute a danger

When certain imperialist demonstrations caused well founded uneasiness abroad, Mussolini wished to explain that the empire exists primarily in the will to power, and that Italy, rich in population and poor in territory, must occupy in the world that position to which she is entitled

But she may occupy that position by two methods by her great energy in peaceful work, or through warfare. An imperialist frame of mind cannot but lead to war. And against whom?

There are no more empires in continental Europe. nominally the sole European empire is Great Britain. The peoples who have created empires have never announced their intention beforehand. The empire is not formed until it exists in practice. The British Empire did not proclaim itself until after the acts of empire building, and this was not the work of the State alone, but primarily of magnificently energetic individuals, from Clive and Hastings to Cecil Rhodes. To announce an empire in advance is really to provide a comic spectacle. Nevertheless, what empire could Italy possess under present conditions?

It would be absurd to call Italy's poor colonies an empire. Rhodes, the Dodecanese, Erythrea, Somaliland, and Libya have no more than a million and a half inhabitants, and most of the Libyans

are in no way under Italian control. Somaliland and Erythrea may have a modest economic future, if we make great sacrifices and lock up great quantities of capital. Libya, the only large colony, is, as I have said, nothing but a vast stretch of sand, it will never have the smallest value and never repay a fraction of the immense sums spent upon it.

How can Italy turn herself into an empire with her present colonies? And how else can she do it?

Italy's neighbours are Switzerland, France, Austria, and Yugoslavia. Switzerland and France are outside the scope of discussion, now that Austria is reduced to a State inhabited solely by Germans, she cannot offer encouragement to imperialist designs. And no reasonable man can suppose that an empire could be constituted at Yugoslavia's expense.

In reality only two large European countries have colonial possessions. Great Britain has Dominions, Protectorates, and colonies more than thirty-four million square kilometres in area; France governs some twelve million square kilometres as colonies, Protectorates, or mandated territory. As Great Britain's possessions are principally Dominions—that is, free nations united to the Mother Country only by political and emotional ties—it is in fact France who owns the largest number of colonies.

In practice no enterprise of this kind could be

attempted in America, in the countries where there are large agglomerations of Italians, so that Italy could establish her empire only upon the ruins of Great Britain or France

There is no statement more ridiculous than that Italy needs colonies as an outlet for her surplus population

If, people say, Italy's birth rate exceeds her death rate annually by about half a million, she needs colonies

Only persons wholly ignorant of economic science, like the Italian Fascists, could argue in such a foolish manner. They think that emigration and colonies are cognate terms, and that any country, though lacking capital or possessing only very limited capital resources, can turn colonial territory into land suitable for settlement

On the contrary, the nations which possess large colonies are likewise those which do not emigrate

Ridiculous as this may seem, the explanation is simple

Emigrating nations are likewise those whose capital resources are so inadequate that they cannot absorb the labour power of their population. Some, therefore, are obliged to emigrate to countries where capital is multiplying more rapidly than labour

In France the phase of colonial development began just at the moment when the birth rate was arrested. It was not men who sought new lands, but

capital which sought fresh investments, and political aims helped or stimulated colonial enterprise

Germany was a country which sent large numbers of emigrants overseas. When she became an industrial country she was able to absorb her growing population in industry. It was then, when emigration had ceased, that her colonial empire was acquired, which she lost by the Treaty of Versailles. In 1880 German emigration had fallen to a little over 100,000 persons annually, in 1890 to less than 100,000, and in 1900 to barely 20,000. It might then be observed that immigration exceeded emigration, and that the colonies absorbed only a negligible proportion of the German workers.

Nothing is more foolish than to suppose that the workers of progressive nations can go *en masse* to seek employment in countries with an arid or tropical climate, where the native workers are paid low wages, or where there is insufficient capital.

If European workers are to go in large numbers to distant countries, they must find there conditions favourable to development, resulting in an excess of capital over the labour supply. The reason why the Italians, and indeed all Europeans, are more willing to go to the United States of America, is that they find work at once, or, in other words, free capital.

When poor countries, or those with inadequate capital resources, establish empires, they intensify

the crisis from which they are suffering. Indeed, all attempts to develop colonies increase distress by stimulating the export of capital which is more urgently required at home.

At present Italy has not many colonies, but she has several on which she has expended immense sums to no purpose. The vast wealth squandered uselessly in the Libyan enterprise would alone have sufficed to equip Italy with water power, and would have gone far towards the electrification of her railways.

The expenditure on Libya and on a stupid effort in Albania, together with the rest of Italy's colonial expenditure, has amounted to nearly six milliard gold lire. Libya alone cost well over three milliards.

By this means Italy has aggravated her distress, and she has not succeeded in sending emigrants to her colonies, except in ludicrously small numbers.

Where has she, on the other hand, sent the great mass of her emigrants?

Before the war to the United States of America, since the war to France.

We must always bear in mind what I have already observed: if France began her colonial policy at the moment when her birth rate fell, Germany began hers at the moment when her emigration ceased.

This amply proves that it is not men but capital resources which seek employment in the colonies.

With a doubtful sense of expediency Italian nationalism demands colonies for the workers at the very time when the greater part of Italy is in need of capital for development at home, and when a further export of capital would only aggravate unemployment and poverty.

The reason why I have always opposed Italian colonial enterprise is that I envisage the true facts. Nevertheless, it is proper to think of Italy's future as affected by coming changes. I know very well that there is no connection between the density and development of Italy's population and any kind of colonial development or acquisition of colonies. But Italy must not, in justice, be pushed aside—this primarily for political reasons; she, too, must be at liberty to possess colonies, even if she gains nothing by them.

Besides, nobody can tell what technical and industrial advance may enable us to exploit wealth which is now unproductive, and it would be unjust not to take great centres of population into account. Nevertheless, this problem has nothing to do with surplus population or the birth-rate.

If Italy possessed the colonies for which the self-styled imperialists are clamouring, she would only increase her difficulties.

A policy of colonial occupation on Italy's part has, therefore, no relation to the economic position of the Italians. On the other hand, it may constitute a political programme.

But then we must revert to our first question. At whose expense, against whom, can Italy build up a colonial empire by rapid strides? Certainly not against England; probably not against Turkey either, for she is a tenacious and unyielding enemy, and her territory has few attractions.

Against France, then?

It must be plainly stated that, if France gave up her Syrian mandate and her rights in Morocco, the problem of Italian emigration would not be one step nearer solution, and the capital at Italy's disposal would be withdrawn from her national industry, to the serious detriment of the workers and of all classes except the profiteers, who have been dreaming since the war of new wars and new investments.

It is all to Italy's interest to have in France a rich and prosperous neighbour, just as it is all to her interest to have Germany developing prosperously. Quite apart from any political consideration, the collapse of one of these great nations would be an economic disaster to Italy.

Foreigners sometimes regard France with undue pessimism on account of her internal political dissensions, the absence of a genuine increase in her population, and her post-war difficulties. It is common to hear people in England, Germany, and Italy talk of France as a decadent country, lacking any wholesome political principles. Foreigners who judge France by certain aspects of Parisian

life, and Paris by one or two districts particularly frequented by themselves, are widely at fault

Not only is France a healthy country, she is a country with marvellous resources, a producing country with first rate workmen and a great aptitude for thrift. She may have made mistakes sometimes in her post war policy, she may have assumed responsibilities outside Europe which are unnecessary and too great a burden, but she has energy enough to overcome difficulties greater than those which now face her. The fall in the birth rate, which statisticians call oliganthropy, is a result of the diffusion of wealth and of the habit of thrift. It does not point to any falling off in the people's vitality, still less to any deep-seated ill

It is a phenomenon which may be observed in the richest parts of the United States of America as well as in Australia, and in all countries where wealth and civilisation are advancing. Even in Italy those sections of the population that have attained a sufficient degree of wealth, in Piedmont and Liguria, have the same birth rate as France, and in some cases even lower

No doubt, if France were to be perpetually at loggerheads with Germany or Great Britain, the arrest of her birth rate would in the long run be a source of danger, but a continuation of existing hatreds and dissensions would be fatal to Germany herself and to Great Britain before it became fatal

to France. That is why all intelligent democratic opinion in Europe must bend its whole energy towards discovering a more humane *modus vivendi*, now that post war follies are a thing of the past, and towards substituting a policy of construction and life for the present policy of destruction.

Regarded from the human point of view, it is certainly unjust that the two most populous nations in continental Europe, with the exception of Russia—the two nations which have the largest population in proportion to their territory, Germany and Italy—should have either no colonies at all or colonies of inconsiderable size.

But the problem is not how to rob those nations which have colonies and take territory from them, the problem is rather to secure from such nations conditions of absolute equality in the territories they control. Before suspicions and latent conflict arose, the Italians found an ample outlet for their labour in French North Africa, and French capital often united with Italian labour in joint civilising activities.

The reason why Italy did not suffer from terrible unemployment after the war was solely that at least 800,000 Italians went to France, where they found capital and employment.

It is plain that Italian imperialism cannot be directed either against Germany or Russia. Germany has no territory to give up and has no common frontier with Italy. Neither can it be directed

against Switzerland, Austria, or Yugoslavia—that is, against neighbouring countries

An attack on Turkey in Asia Minor would be alike insane and disastrous. Finally, if Italy obtained mandates in place of France or Great Britain, she would assume a heavy burden without any profit.

Italian imperialist policy, then, can only be directed against Great Britain and France. But Italy is an exclusively Mediterranean country, and she is obliged to import from overseas all the necessities of life, this makes an anti British policy impossible for her. Italian imperialism, therefore, must be directed against France, or must at any rate base its hopes on a new world conflagration in which Italy, as victor, would obtain increased power and dominion. But only irresponsible heads could pursue such a catastrophic aim on behalf of a country economically weak, whose resources have been largely exhausted by the war, and whose war debts and military outlay constitute the greater part of the budgetary expenditure.

After all, then, Italian Fascist imperialism is nothing but words. Yet mere words can be a danger because they produce an unhealthily excited state of mind, and war and peace, before they become external facts, exist as states of mind. Belief is created by a mental attitude, said Pascal.

The Italian Fascist leader holds all power concentrated in his own hands. He unites the subtlest prerogatives. Controlled by none, he commands

all the resources of the State. All his Ministers are no more than rank and file soldiers of the Fascist party. Parliament no longer exists. The Press no longer exercises a controlling influence. In practice this is a system of dictatorship—even of absurdity.

A people of forty millions can no longer express any will of its own. It is in the power of a single man and a single party.

Even if we grant that Mussolini possesses every talent, yet uncontrolled power is a standing menace to the life of the people at home and to international peace. In his variable infallibility the head of the Government controls the destiny of the nation.

But in 1911 he opposed the military expedition to Libya in an anti-militarist and revolutionary spirit, and in 1913 he made preparations for revolution. In 1914 he caused the outbreak of the revolt known as the "Red Week," and incited proletarian crowds to an attack on Capitalism. In 1914 he was violently opposed to the war, and in 1915 he glorified it. In 1919 he established Fascism as an anti-monarchist and anti-capitalist movement, then he turned it into a reactionary movement. In 1922, right up to the eve of the march on Rome, he still proclaimed himself a republican, and a few days later, having taken over the reins of government, he regarded as traitors men who advocated, with far greater moderation, only a part of the Fascist programme of 1919.

If there is no longer any opposition in Italy, what further transformations has Fascism in store for us? Will Mussolini yet become a Communist, in view of possible currents of popular feeling? Will he perhaps suddenly revert to his *original* tenets?

From the point of view of our civilisation Mussolini is not a forerunner but a loiterer. In his speech and his gestures he reverts to the long past forms of primitive civilisations, not only is he far removed from the thought of the future, he is even far removed from our present civilisation, he is an Italian of the fifteenth century in the midst of an irresolute and hesitating crowd. He is not a man who will go far, but a man who comes from afar.

But what principle is there in Fascism capable of inspiring the masses with respect for the Fascist State and its authority? The organisation of an armed force is not a policy, still less an ideal—it is merely a temporary necessity. It cannot be supposed that it is possible to suppress all kinds of freedom for an indefinite period, to force the same opinions upon everybody, and permanently to impose centralised organisations, more tyrannical than those of Imperial Russia.

✓ The Fascist leaders have always declared that public opinion is nothing to them, that they rely on force and not on consent.

Several centuries ago Italy's greatest political

writer, Machiavelli, pointed to the dangers involved in this idea: "He who has few enemies," he said, "can have security without a fuss; *but he who has the whole universe for enemy can never be secure, and the more he resorts to cruelty, the feebler his rule becomes.*"

✓ Dictatorship cannot legally exist under a monarchy. Either the sovereign submits to the dictatorship, and sovereignty thereby loses its true purpose; or else the dictatorship merely expresses the will of the sovereign, and then the law of the State is in reality abolished and the monarchy loses its constitutional character.

In the long run force does not suffice for the defence of a system of government. Principles of absolutism must always be founded on theocracy and tradition. Absolute power was based upon the will of God. Our ancestors honestly believed that God had conferred upon a single man, or a single family, the right of ruling other men. Absolute sovereigns were sincerely convinced that they had a Divine mission. Any act of opposition against the sovereign power was also an act of opposition against the Divinity. There was a kind of priestly solemnity in all the poses of the last sovereigns who believed themselves to rule by Divine right—Nicholas II of Russia and William II of Germany. Nicholas II never deviated from the notion that he was fulfilling a Divine mission in all his idiocy and stupid solemnity.

But absolute power which does not emanate from God, nor from the right of conquest—what is such power? Nothing but transient coercion.

For some time Bolshevism has exercised a certain power of attraction over groups of revolutionary workers. In many countries Fascism exercises a certain power of attraction over the most reactionary classes, because they think that in it they have found an antidote to Bolshevism.

The Soviet Government has long sought to spread its principles beyond its own frontiers. It has been unsuccessful, and has been driven slowly to abandon its aim of world-wide revolution. The effort of Fascism will meet with no better fate; it cannot promote a movement of world wide reaction.

There have been attempts to copy it, and there may be others. But these attempts cannot develop into anything serious in great industrial countries like Great Britain, France, Belgium, Germany, and the Scandinavian countries. No personal dictatorship is possible in France. In Germany the democratic parties and the Republic are solidly established. A little Fascist rising attempted in Belgium produced prompt and immediate resistance. A small Fascist movement has cropped up in Czechoslovakia, it is not serious and will come to nothing. No Fascist movement can be anything but a fruitless experiment in countries which have attained a high degree of economic develop-

ment; it will be followed by popular movements whose outcome cannot be predicted.

Fascism is only an Italian phenomenon. Abroad there are mere colourless imitations of no importance

No serious politician in France accepts a Fascist policy; the reactionaries, even though they are accused of Fascist tendencies, declare that they have nothing to do with Fascism

In England the Prime Minister, Baldwin, declared in a famous speech that the English people would never tolerate a Mussolini

Sir Austen Chamberlain, who has sometimes been accused of a certain degree of good will towards Italian Fascism, was pleased to say to the British Press representatives that Fascism is a purely Italian phenomenon, but that if Mussolini had contemplated carrying it beyond the borders of Italy he, Chamberlain, would have opposed it. I hope that Sir Austen Chamberlain did not say precisely that, for I think he can hardly compare Italy, who in the course of her history has endowed mankind with three great civilisations, with Somaliland or the Sudan.

The only Anglo-Saxon politician who has to some extent defended Fascism is Mr. Winston Churchill. He repeated the statement (which everybody now recognises is incorrect) that Fascism saved Italy from financial disaster and Communism. He even said—or at least the words were attributed

to him: "If I had been an Italian, I should have been a Fascist"

It is difficult to understand why Mr. Churchill is not a Fascist in England, where the social crisis is serious and class conflict at least as violent as in Italy. The reason is that Fascism is not for export, and even the most extreme Conservatives are satisfied to watch its effects on a friendly country (*faciamus experimentum in anima vili*), but they fully understand that it cannot be imitated.

Even chance dictatorships do not like to be confused with Italian Fascism.

On the day on which he effected his *coup d'état* in Poland, Marshal Pilsudski made a point of announcing:

"I do not think that anything resembling Fascism could be acclimatised in Poland. The people are patient, but they need to feel affectionate confidence in their leaders. They would not submit to force used, as has been done, on behalf of small local organisations. No, Fascism is not made to suit our needs."

An unlucky Italian Ambassador to the United States of America made a remark most insulting to Italy at a public meeting. When it was said that the Americans would not have tolerated the suppression of all freedom, he replied that Fascism would be useless in America or among the Anglo-Saxons, but was necessary in Italy.

Fascism and Bolshevism are not two opposing

principles, they are both the negation of the same principles of freedom and order. Fascism, as Mussolini has said, is a negation of the principles of 1789—that is, likewise, of the principles of the American Constitution of 1787 and of English public law. It is, therefore, a negation of all the principles of modern civilisation. It is a reversion to the ethics of absolute monarchy and the individual resort to force—a reversion to the conception of war as a national industry.

The order imposed by Fascism is merely superficial, for the great mass of the workers, and the intellectuals, submit to force but do not accept the system. But a system which is not rooted in the conscience of the people collapses at the first shock. Shakespeare, who knew the human heart better than any other man, wrote that authority based on fear lacks a solid foundation, for fear *turns to hatred in the course of time*.

In Russia, on the eve of the Tsarist collapse, everything seemed orderly, whilst in England and France discontent was freely expressed. Anyone who visited Russia returned convinced that the Tsarist rule was firmly established. Scialoja, a man of quick and subtle perceptions, who was Minister of Foreign Affairs in my Cabinet, returned from Russia a few weeks before the fall of the Tsarist regime, and announced with positive assurance to all the journalists that the overthrow of Tsardom was impossible. English

politicians, men of wide experience, fell into the same error

The order which reigns in Italy is only the semblance of order. Beneath it is nothing but hatred. All the most honest minds feel the utmost aversion to Fascism—the people, tortured, crushed, and insulted, submit because they must.

If it were not that everybody is inclined to abuse Fascism and Mussolini, why was it necessary to pass a law decreeing the imprisonment of any citizen who speaks ill of Mussolini and Fascism?

I am very sure that, if people could vote freely in Italy, the Fascists and Mussolini would not receive even a fiftieth part of the votes—only a small minority of excitable Black Shirts and malignant reactionaries forming a decadent society.

Indeed, if there were no danger to be apprehended from voting, why abolish all elections, even for local government?

There are only two solutions of the problem of Italian Fascism—revolution or war, or one following the other. the longer Fascism lasts the greater is the danger of war or revolution.

Italy is now like a country occupied by an armed force. Silence is imposed, consent is imposed by force, no free voice is tolerated. The armed minority is always ready to oppose the great majority—lacking arms, lacking justice, lacking protection.

If anybody speaks ill of Mussolini there is

always a spy ready to denounce him. Espionage flourishes in Italy far more freely than orange-trees: it is everywhere to be met with now. Prison, or assassination without even prison, is the order of the day. The police cannot intervene—sometimes they must even act as accomplices. Magistrates are forced to stop legal proceedings, or to acquit even the most criminal of Fascists.

In all Fascist journals there is open talk of those persons who must be killed: and often they are the most highly respected men in the country—former Ministers, Senators, great authors, and so on. Not only Socialists and republicans, but Liberals, democrats, and even Catholics and Conservatives who do not accept Fascism, are regarded as anti-national.

Fascism may last for three weeks, three months, or three years longer. However that may be, a Government based on violence and depending on a single man cannot last permanently. Mussolini likes to compare himself to Sulla. But Sulla, the great Roman dictator, had to wage great wars and bring great wealth to Rome in order to win popularity: and even his dictatorship did not last long. Seriously, what war can Fascism wage? We are always hearing talk of war, and the Fascists think of nothing else. But, looking ahead, we can see no war that would not be disastrous. Mussolini even said in one of his speeches that 1926 must be an imperial year for Italy. It was nothing but

a dark period of violence and death, of murders and penury. The people have been reduced to black bread, and the death penalty for opponents has been introduced. The sole imperial act, the sole gesture of magnificence and supreme power,⁴ has been to refrain from paying 21 milliard lire of debt when it fell due.

But during this year it has become clear that Fascism is an international menace. In France a whole organisation was discovered—spies, *agents provocateurs*, and even Fascist Government officials—working in the pay and under the direction of the Italian Government.

Like Bolshevism, Italian Fascism (with even greater virulence) has sent propagandists, secret agents, and organisers to almost every country. These remarkable propagandists have even tried to introduce Fascist methods abroad—espionage, calumny, and sometimes assassination and murder. Mainly in France and Belgium, but also in the United States of America, there have been occurrences, and there will be more, which elucidate the true international activities of Fascism.

Yet Conservatives are still to be found who are alarmed at Bolshevist methods, but extremely indulgent towards the methods of Fascism. They do not consider that there is little difference between the two, and that, in certain respects, Fascism and Bolshevism are the same. Both are similar post-war phenomena—both are international sources

of danger. Only Fascism possesses neither a moral code nor a social foundation.

The reason why reactionary groups, even in free countries like England, America, and France, feel certain sympathy with Fascism is simply that there are everywhere blind Conservatives who favour reaction in any form whatever, and do not gauge the consequences. Need we be surprised?

Even to-day in the most civilised countries there are still barbarians. A man may use electric rail ways, the telephone, and the typewriter, and still be a barbarian. Civilisation is within ourselves, in our moral conceptions, our religious and civic ideas of life. In the great European countries and in America I know great industrialists, rich men, men of the world, who are well dressed barbarians, far less advanced than a Swiss artisan or a Danish peasant.

Asia has lost all respect for our Western civilisation because our technical progress has no relation to our moral development. Modern barbarians often occupy the highest positions, and they are the true menace to our future.

There are even people who regard Fascism with pleasure and repeat the unchanging commonplaces the Fascists have improved the efficiency of the railways (as if railways were not efficient everywhere now, and as if there had not been the same post war difficulties everywhere), Fascism saved Italy from financial collapse (while in fact it has done nothing but make mistakes), and so on.

The modern barbarians think nothing of the spectacle of a country with a population of forty millions deprived of all freedom, their most honoured citizens robbed of all personal security, without legal remedy, deported, massacred, murdered, the Press closed down, the life of the spirit destroyed

There are, too, men of the world who admire Mussolini on horseback, the Fascists in their black shirts, Fascist processions with trumpets and bugles, etc. Hysterical women, especially, find interest in these shows. The lounges of the large hotels are often filled with imbeciles from all countries—men with monocles, ladies whose one thought is amusement. It is for the most part these half-witted people who come to Italy without seeing anything, who hear nothing, never talk with the people, and know the national life only through the theatres, shows, and banquets which are the real propagandists among foreigners. Often, especially in the case of Americans, these people are adventurers who, just because they come from democratic countries, like to mix with the aristocracy of Europe. In Italy, where nearly everybody is opposed to Fascism, the aristocracy for the most part favours it. They are usually short of money and hope to secure more through reduced wages and the oppression of the people. They were of no importance, and now for the first time Fascism regards them as a social force and makes use of

them on all sides. Many American ladies, who come to Italy and like to be introduced into the drawing rooms of the aristocracy, repeat what they hear without investigating it.

The American Press—with certain exceptions—and especially the Yellow Press, shows profound ignorance of European affairs. There is appreciation of any manifestation of force (the strong man), pomp, sounding phrases, everything theatrical.

Mussolini earns sympathies almost like the famous boxers Tunney and Dempsey. In the matter of pomp and theatrical show no government has ever been more grandiose than Fascism.

But what will endude of all this?

Fascism and Bolshevism are two negations of order.

Nevertheless, however one may regard it, Bolshevism is an ideal. It is an attempt by a minority to impose Communist organisation in a country exhausted by two unsuccessful wars, where there is not and never has been a numerous and intelligent industrial middle class, and where the great majority of the people are illiterate and play no part whatever in the national life.

Bolshevism was conceived by its leaders as a Communist scheme of organisation. Much of what we deplore in Bolshevism is found also in the history of the French Revolution, which we admire as a whole because we view it at a distance. Many of the faults of Bolshevism are common to all

revolutions Bolshevism is the Socialism of extreme poverty, with all its errors and faults. But there is in it something which is not merely violence.

But Fascism has no ideal. It is simply the seizure of the State by an armed minority, which proclaims principles in flat contradiction to those for which it had always struggled. The only idea which can be detected in it is that of the Nation-State, depending on an organised party armed so as to make its power effective. But these demonstrations and poses are caricatures of those of William II, and can only provoke the most serious conflicts at home and excite suspicion abroad.

Any kind of nationalism must inevitably lead to fresh wars. But Italy, by reason of her social structure and the growth of her population, needs only peace, freedom, and trade.

Thus Italy and Russia have, each in its own way, destroyed freedom.

But can these two phenomena be regarded as isolated?

We must recognise that there are reactionary tendencies, nationalist dogmas, and excessive Protection in other countries still suffering from war time neurosis, and these restrict and menace freedom.

X

Freedom, reaction, and Socialism in the light of History

THE crisis in the history of freedom was an inevitable consequence of the war.

People's mentality had undergone a profound change throughout Europe after the war. At least sixty million men had learnt to kill and to consider the death of the enemy as a supreme good. Whilst these men were fighting a number of speculators were accumulating large fortunes, larger than any before in Europe.

After the war the Peace Treaties left a deep sense of dissatisfaction. In many countries the victors do not feel secure, the vanquished have not abandoned certain aspirations which they consider just. And these aspirations are increasingly dangerous just because in the East they are sometimes based on the sense of justice—that very sense of justice which the Allied nations had proclaimed during the war.

It is this state of moral confusion which involves the most serious menace to freedom and the ideal of freedom.

At all times freedom has had numerous enemies in the reactionary parties, as also in the extremist parties.

True Liberals are those who desire neither to be oppressed nor to oppress. Those who do not wish to be oppressed have always been very numerous. As for those who do not wish to oppress, they have always been far fewer, and, since the war their number has been further greatly reduced, for the war developed the ferments of hatred and violence.

In the lives of individuals, as of nations, there come periods of exceptional and feverish excitement. Truly, we are now living in an exceptional period, and moral sentiment is greatly abated.

But need we conclude that this post war morbid condition will produce fresh paroxysms of disease? Need we conclude that the new methods of violence are permanent? Is it to be imagined that free institutions are finally destroyed? Are they not rather passing through a transitory crisis? Is it to be imagined that the menace to freedom will remain for ever? Can it be believed that we shall long submit to the domination of an armed minority, and that the example of a few countries where this has happened will be followed by other countries? Can it be believed that Europe will long continue to oscillate between revolution and reaction, without reaching the stable equilibrium of free institutions?

I think not. I rather incline to believe the contrary.

In my judgment the present phase is transitory.

—it is only a post-war crisis—and we shall shortly revert to Liberal principles, which alone can restore prosperity and peace to Europe.

Except in mathematics there are no such things as absolute principles. Politics are simply a manifestation of life. How could there be absolute principles? There is nothing permanent or definite in social institutions. In different epochs history has always presented us with the conflict between conservative and reactionary principles. But only in epochs of freedom have modern nations made great progress.

There are moments, even in the most civilised societies, when reaction may be necessary to oppose the forces of dissolution, to strengthen the discipline of labour, and to augment the authority of the State. There are cases where reaction is necessary, and where it frequently renders a service to liberty.

Ancient Rome experienced dictatorship during the era of democracy. In every democracy conflicts may arise, and have arisen, which cannot be settled by ordinary methods. But dictatorship in Ancient Rome, except during a few years of discord and civil war, was far from being an attack on the State, it was rather a defence of the State.

In republican Rome the dictatorship was provided for by public law and conducted with wisdom. The dictator was nominated by the Senate, and his powers were conferred by the

Senate itself—that is, by Parliament. He exercised the authority of the Consuls—that is, executive authority, and he was chosen for a definite purpose—to overcome a particular difficulty, usually war, or in case of disagreement between the Senate and the popular *Comitia*, or when the Republic itself was in danger. His mandate was for a limited period, often only a few days or a few weeks, and seldom outlasted six months. It was a useful and practical method of overcoming the crisis of democracy. It was no derogation from the dignity and vitality of free institutions.

Modern Parliaments have often in case of need delegated their legislative powers to the Government. But always for a sufficiently short period and for a definite purpose.

But this is utterly different from dictatorship understood as seizure of the State by an individual or a party, or by an individual in the service of a party, or, what is worst of all, by a party in the service of an individual.

Socialism, which is the tendency towards extreme democracy, involves the idea of a society without privileges for wealth or social position. Every highly developed society possesses and has possessed one or other form of Socialism. The noblest minds have always been attracted by the idea of a society in which all men may start with the same advantages in the struggle for life, and may develop their talents in perfect equality. The idea

that every man should owe his social position to his own efforts, and not to inheritance, or chance, or privilege, is so fine that no one can resist its attraction

Though we, Liberals and democrats, do not believe in Socialist formulae, and particularly do not accept the class struggle and the methods of the Socialist parties, yet we cannot but recognise that Socialism, in various forms, is permeating the whole social life of civilised nations. In spite of ourselves, we accept some part of its doctrine. Even whilst we reject it we are inspired by the principles of solidarity which lie at its roots.

Every day there is fresh evidence of the deep infiltration of Socialism as a moral principle and a basis of popular action. There is more and more lively discussion of Marxian principles, but the Labour movement permeates our whole modern life. It is not that the programmes of orthodox theorists are winning through, but that the needs of society dominate the situation. A large number of ideas and reforms which were scoffed at twenty years ago have now been realised—the eight hour day to begin with, which all economists opposed and all declared impracticable.

Socialism and reaction may be regarded as arbitrary forms of social activity. Their character is rather that of correctives and exceptional phenomena. It is in periods of confusion that reaction may be looked upon as a remedy. Socialist reforms

may be regarded rather as a corrective of the errors and abuses of Capitalism.

But it is Liberalism which meets the permanent needs of modern civilisation in its most advanced phases, which makes possible the greatest progress and the greatest social improvement, the greatest development of wealth and the highest standard of well-being for the people; Liberalism is the normal condition, best adapted to preserve the social life of the most advanced nations.

In the most prosperous years of the nineteenth century, right up to the outbreak of the Great War, Liberalism alone provided a basis for the greatest economic advance, for peace at home and good relations between the peoples. The great modern nations have been moulded by free competition and nothing else; not only freedom of thought and action, but freedom of the Press, of meeting, and of association.

The condition upon which reaction may sometimes be necessary, and therefore useful, is that it be transitory and regarded only as a painful remedy. But any process of adaptation to servitude means decadence. If reaction persists for long it must impoverish, humiliate, and demoralise the countries where it exists. Nations living under a dictatorship are perpetually menaced by revolutions and crises, and when the dictator overcomes internal difficulties he is inevitably driven into adventures abroad—that is, into war, which calls for the unity

of all citizens and puts a stop to domestic opposition. Revolution and war always lurk in countries living under a dictatorship, these are the servile countries. And if bondsmen constitute the great mass of the people, it is they who are readiest in treachery. Their acquiescence is nothing but fear. At the first reverse their resistance is gone. That is why no dictatorship in a modern country is solid or lasting, even when it makes a great display of force, that is why, after it has humiliated the people and crushed the education of the young, it paves the way for revolution.

Dictators, like despotic kings, always profess the best intentions: what people want is well being, not freedom, the Government must save the nation from all perils, real or imaginary, the action of a despotic State is opposed only to the forces of dissolution. To day these arguments are the same as they were a century ago—those who use them fail to see that freedom is the sole remedy, and that only free activities, with all their errors and drawbacks, will save society as a whole from great disasters.

It is man himself that is the greatest of human values. The natural wealth above and below ground is of value only if it is exploited by human activities, on the other hand, human activities on a considerable scale are possible only where there are free men and free institutions.

No authoritarian State in the modern world has

attained a high degree of civilisation nor even a considerable measure of wealth. In the early days of absolutism the evil is not perceived, but decadence is inevitable.

The activities, the labour, of a nation of bondsmen must be of feeble quality. Think what it means, when everything depends on the Government, and the Government depends on a single man, or a handful of men. Servile labour is not fully productive.

The post war neurosis has created alike dictatorships and revolutionary movements. Everyone will recall the great strikes, economic and still more political in character, which followed the war, and the spirit of revolt, everywhere there was the same dislike of work, the same undisciplined spirit. Reaction has often followed revolutionary movements, and where widespread and wholesome democratic customs have been absent, a White dictatorship has been the consequence of threats of Red dictatorship. But revolutionary and reactionary movements are alike the outcome of troubled and altogether exceptional times.

When Europe recovers herself and reverts to a normal life, freedom will be re-established, not as a political necessity, but as a condition of production and commerce, and of life itself.

Exaggerations concerning Bolshevism and the weakness of the reactionary classes. The excesses of Capitalism outside Europe

THERE are still many causes of disorder in Europe, as for instance those which arise from the domestic policy of the new countries created or enlarged by the Peace Treaties. There is the uncertainty of the future. There are Red dictatorships and White dictatorships. There is the multitude of newly rich, war profiteers who, with the help of a pernicious Press, still sow hatred between the nations. There is dangerous nationalist agitation, particularly in States composed of several nationalities. There is the Mediterranean fever of dictatorship. Protection and militarism still survive, at once the cause and the consequence of nationalism, each with its sombre train: disordered currency, unemployment, financial crises, and so on.

In the Conservative Press all these disorders are explained by one single fact, which preoccupies attention day after day: Bolshevism. Russian Bolshevism explains everything and justifies everything. The very same people who find excuses for Fascism and its subversive activities are over-anxious concerning the perils of Bolshevism.

In France, Germany, and England Communism, which hardly existed before the war, finds a fertile soil among the working masses. But the progress made, which is slight in spite of appearances, is intentionally exaggerated.

So long as discontent and exasperation and revolt persist, where they are the hand of Moscow will be discerned. If Bolshevism were really responsible for everything that is attributed to it, no human power could arrest its progress. It would be a vast and invincible force.

In the eyes of the reactionaries Bolshevism explains everything. The White dictatorship in Italy is a bulwark against Bolshevism. General Primo de Rivera, too, has often spoken of the necessity of checking the menace of revolution, in order to justify the Spanish dictatorship, and that in a country where popular revolutions are unknown, where all revolutions have been the work of the military.

Ahd-el Krim fought in the Rif against Spain and France. In reality this was a colonial war, which Spanish Governments, by the way, have always waged unskilfully. But it was sought to trace in this the influence of Bolshevism.

In China deep-seated hostility has arisen towards foreigners and Western Capitalism, once more it is the work of Bolshevism.

Turkey has recovered her independence by force of arms, and has thrown off the shackles of many

scandalous injustices, such as the capitulations and the brigandage of European Capitalism. Whence it is proclaimed that Turkey and the whole world of Islam act under the instructions of Moscow. Throughout Asia there is a ferment of revolt against our devilishly rapacious civilisation: this is the work of Bolshevism.

Let us admit that this kind of blindness is no new thing.

Nothing is more interesting than to read the English Press and English political writings during the French revolutionary and Napoleonic period. All errors, all acts of violence, all revolts which occurred in Europe were attributed to the French and to Napoleon, and revolutionaries whom the French honour to-day were spoken of as brigands, without God or fatherland.

For many years after 1815, on the other hand, everything was attributed to the pernicious influence of Freemasonry, the Liberals, and the Carbonari. Later, when Socialism first raised its head, all crimes were attributed to the perverted principles which would destroy the family, society, and the nation.

If Bolshevism were responsible for all the errors attributed to it, if it could influence men at will, even in the most distant and most highly developed countries, if it could extend its activities over every continent, if it alone could cause the peoples in Europe and Asia and the Mussulmans of Africa

to revolt, if it could cause unrest and violent disturbances in all nations, we should have to admit that it wielded such immense influence over *men's minds* as to justify and render lawful every one of its triumphs. Bolshevism would be destined to prevail, because it would be greater and more powerful than any opposition, and it would be idle to resist so immense a vital force.

The truth is far more modest. Bolshevism does not represent so formidable a power. It is only our mistakes which give power to numerous malcontents. It is natural that Bolshevism, like all revolutionary forces, should take advantage of this. But what is great is not Bolshevism, but our folly and our addiction to violence. Our errors are the cause, Bolshevism is only a consequence.

Some years have passed since the war ended, and we persist, especially in Central and Eastern Europe, in pursuing the same policy of secret agreements and alliances uniting one group of States against another group, with the result that no policy of disarmament is possible, for suspicion and fear are aggravated rather than diminished. There are *men still on the scene* who were responsible for the conflagration, there are even men and dictators who openly seek fresh conflicts. The type of Socialists who in nearly every country have taken part in the work of government have moderated their programme. Idealists, malcontents, timid persons, and those who honestly wish

to avert war, are gravitating towards Communism. Instead of mending their ways, in many countries the well to do and ruling classes set up dictatorships or aim at a reactionary monarchy, or else they praise dictatorship and show sympathy for countries where it is in force. Is it not reasonable that the people should become more and more suspicious? But I do not know of a single country in Europe which is really permeated with Bolshevik influence, and where Communism is a genuine and serious menace. No sooner does Communism reveal itself clearly than it provokes such a reaction as to paralyse itself immediately. At the present time the Communists are disposed to slacken their propaganda in Europe.

As for the international activities of Bolshevism, in Europe and beyond, the vast schemes attributed to Soviet Russia a year or two ago were, for the most part, figments of the imagination of a few reactionary journalists, mainly English. It may be true that Bolshevik agents stirred up revolt in China. But did not the wickedness of Europeans in China merit the deepest hostility from the Chinese, and was it not bound, sooner or later, to bring about bloody conflicts? Chinese tendencies are at once nationalist and Communist. Nationalism is the outcome of the treacherous robbery and cruelty of Europeans, who often enough committed horrible crimes, particularly at the time of the Boxer rising. The Chinese revolt is simply a

response to the most barbarous form of capitalist exploitation ever known to man

The Chinese people are the most patient in the world, and the least addicted to violence. The practical philosophy of Confucius and Mencius, which has penetrated deep into the Chinese soul, is of all others the most pacific in its influence. If the Europeans and their armies of occupation had not indulged in countless excesses, if they had not always resorted to miserable intrigues to obtain concessions and exploit the economic situation, China would probably have offered no opposition to trade.

But the most shameful part of the story was and is the methods of European Capitalism in China. In those Chinese provinces where the anti foreign agitation is most violent European capitalists have ruined more lives than the casualties in a great war.

Not only adult workers but children too have been exploited in the most shameful manner, working fifteen and sixteen hours a day without a break and without holidays, and wages have been almost everywhere reduced to famine rates by the competition of the mass of poor workers.

The fullest inquiries in England into the brutalities of manufacturers in the early days of industrialism pale by comparison with the awful spectacle of European capitalist actions in China. Those who have invested their capital most profit-

ably in China, and who cheerfully receive their dividends and pocket large profits year by year, complain of Bolshevik propaganda in China. But they do not consider that, if there has been Bolshevik propaganda, it found men's minds disposed to hatred. They do not perceive that their immense profits drip with blood, and that the development by Europeans of textile industries, among others, is one of the darkest pages in the history of world industry.

And the iron industry—already it is burdened with heavy responsibility in Europe, is it not also responsible for many of the errors committed in Morocco? Has not the clerical policy of Spain long been stupid and exasperating? If a country like the Riff, with only a small population—hardly as much as a single Spanish province—held out for so long and resisted so desperately, were there not good reasons for resistance?

The day on which the King of Spain made the great mistake of declaring a Holy War—that is, a war against the infidel—did not merely restore his own country to its former clerical mentality, it lent a religious character to the resistance of the Riff. Though the quick political intelligence of the French corrected the mistake, its harmful results were none the less protracted.

We complain of the opposition with which Europe meets to day outside Europe. But Europe is only gathering the fruits of capitalist madness.

and a spirit of plunder which has undermined the very foundations of international ethics. In the course of a few years Europe has not only changed from a creditor to a debtor continent; she has also forfeited much of her moral authority.

The two European countries which do most to trouble Europe's dreams, Turkey and Russia, have been driven into their excesses by our own excesses.

I myself took part in international conferences in 1919 and 1920 in which Turkey's fate was determined, and I tried to avert the worst errors. But how could I stand out when the idea was prevalent that the fate of the vanquished could be arbitrarily determined?

Many crimes were committed against the Turks. They were to be ejected from Europe. The Sultan was to be banished to Broussa. Territory in Asia Minor was to be taken from the Turks to be given to the Greeks and Armenians. Armenia wished not only to establish an Armenian State with reasonable frontiers, but to create a great Armenian Republic, including Erzerum and Trebizond. Greece clamoured for Hellenic rights—that is, Smyrna and the best parts of Asia Minor.

The Turks retreated to Asia Minor, where in their anger they recovered the strength to resist. They wiped out the Armenians and defeated the Greeks. And then the European Powers, who had incited the Greeks and Armenians against the Turks, and had stirred them up and armed them,

presented a contemptible spectacle and recognised Turkey's victory

The Turks abandoned Constantinople—the centre of all the intrigues of financiers and diplomats in the service of financiers—and in their poor capital at Angora they found independence. Morally they defeated Europe. Turkey won her liberty and the abolition of the infamous capitulations. But why should not the Turks continue in the same path? Do they need the counsel of Moscow, and is it not simply absurd to attribute Turkey's splendid resistance and her policy of modernisation to the influence of the Soviets?

Again, the policy pursued towards Russia has been such a series of errors that, when a detailed history comes to be written of the Russian policy of the Western States during and after the war, certain things will appear incredible.

Russia differed from Turkey in that she was not an enemy, but only a fallen friend. She had made an effort beyond her strength and had given way.

When she collapsed and fell a victim to Bolshevism, her former allies took advantage of the fact and spared her neither suffering nor humiliation. Was it hatred for Communist and revolutionary rule, or simply lust and the desire for new dominion? Or was it both?

Nobody had ever protested against the crimes of Tsardom with the acquiescence of all, the half-witted mystic had committed the worst crimes

known to history against the intellectuals, the Jews, and all free spirits. Only a few high minded men, a few English or American writers, had denounced the horrors of Siberia and the deportations by administrative order.

But everybody agreed in denouncing the errors of Bolshevism, sometimes exaggerating, sometimes inventing them.

Advantage was taken of the difficulties of Soviet Russia, and large slices of Russian territory were handed over to other States. War was actually waged against Russia simply because her Government was Communist.

When I was called to the head of the Italian Government in June 1919, a military expedition had been prepared for the occupation of Georgia. The Entente countries, which had been Russia's allies, not only consented but urged Italy to occupy Georgia—a fertile land, rich in petrol and minerals. We were assured that Georgia would be an ideal field for Italian enterprise. When my predecessor handed over the reins of government to me, he talked with enthusiasm of this expedition, which was regarded with favour by nearly all parties. Steps had already been taken with a view to exploitation, and banks had been established.

I realised at once that this expedition was a violation of all international law, that it was risky from a military point of view, and that it must inevitably lead to war with the Moscow Govern-

ment, and that the issue of such a war was uncertain

Far from being a good stroke of business, the occupation of Russian territory would be a financial disaster and a military risk. I had, therefore, no hesitation in stopping all preparations for the expedition, and I was very glad that I had taken this step, for shortly afterwards the Bolshevik army entered Tiflis, which is sufficient proof that, if Italy had invaded Georgia, she must have fought Russia

But at the time a violent campaign was launched against me by the reactionaries. They could not attack my actions, nor my conduct during the war, for it was my coolness and my determination alone which found the means to resist after the disaster at Caporetto and so to save Italy, so they said that in peace time I was an abstentionist and a defeatist

Let me add that the same reactionaries who craved the Georgian adventure had committed the most flagrant acts of madness in order to seize Dalmatia and launch out on extravagant adventures in Asia Minor

The nations which at first were Russia's allies made war on her solely because her Government was Communist. When they found themselves unable to send their own armies, mainly because of the opposition of the working classes, they armed rebel troops. Long after the old regime

had ceased to exist they persisted in the desire to recognise it. The rebel armies, equipped at the Allies' expense, fell one after another. Kolchak, Denikin, Yudenich, Wrangel, met not only with the resistance of the Soviet armed troops but with the hostility of the Russian people. Indeed, these men were not struggling against Bolshevik violence to win free institutions for their country; they were only children of the past struggling for the restoration of Tsardom—in other words, for a degrading system, worse and more immoral than any other, the loathsome system of government which had made possible the excesses and the violence of Bolshevism and prepared the way for them.

After military failure there came the economic struggle. The desire was to surround the Russians with barbed wire, as the saying went. It was calculated that isolation would mean starvation and would cause their downfall.

The notion was at once absurd and immoral. Wherever there are profits to be made, Europeans have been ready enough to trade.

They have traded, and still trade, in immoral wares: opium in China, Indian idols, narcotic drugs. Not long ago threats were used against China because she wished to stop the opium trade. Certain peoples who are given to extreme Puritanism in religion also trade with barbarous and cannibal races, and do not think it beneath

them to make enormous profits by selling alcohol, which destroys whole populations who are not accustomed to that poison of European society.

Abstention from trade with Russia was simply an act of political hostility. The Bolsheviki resisted; they did not succumb, they rejected every form of financial control, they really did defend the nation's cause. The result was that all European States, one after another, hastened to recognise Russia, in the hope of capitalist concessions and economic privileges which Russia has not granted and, if she desires to preserve her freedom, will never grant.

The illustrious ruler of an Oriental State visited me a few years ago and asked my advice. After I had answered all his questions I was anxious to give him a last piece of advice: "Mistrust European Capitalism, it is animated by a spirit of plunder. Facilitate trade between all countries. But never, for any reason, grant special concessions which restrict your independence and freedom of action in any way."

Every day Europe is losing her economic supremacy; but, what is worse, she is losing her good character. I have seen a prayer that is recited in certain American churches. After thanking God for His many mercies to mankind, the faithful thank Him once more because He has set the ocean between Europe and America.

Whenever they meet, the members of the League

of Nations praise their own achievements. But whenever an importunate voice from a distant country is heard, it is a brusque reminder of the real facts. About two years ago the Australian delegate observed ironically that a million more men are under arms in Europe than before the League of Nations was formed. In March 1926 the question of Germany's entry into the League was made the occasion for a storm of demands for permanent seats on the Council (not always made in good faith). (Were not forces at work which, outside France and England, took the opportunity to strike a death-blow at the League of Nations?)

At the very moment when an agreement seemed to have ended the whole affair Brazil's demand was raised for a seat on the Council then and there, and this brought about a crisis which at such a time endangered alike peaceful agreement and the working of the League of Nations. And when Vandervelde rightly reproached the head of the Brazilian delegation for his intransigent attitude, the Brazilian was able to make this ready reply: "It is not for Europe to talk of peace. In South America we live in peace, and the example of Europe is of no value to us."

The words of the Brazilian delegate were reported in the Press, more or less as I have quoted them (verbal exactitude matters little); certainly they do small credit to his diplomatic

skill and make no difference to the fact that his demand was inopportune. But they do prove how low Europe has fallen in the eyes of the world.

✧ In almost every country under European protection, in almost all the colonies, there is a ferment of revolt to day. In many parts of Asia and Africa there is no assurance of the fidelity of native troops in the future. What is the position in Egypt? What is the position in India and nearly all parts of Asia?

Neither was the attitude adopted towards Germany and Russia the best calculated to attain peace and rebuild the life of Europe. Except for Alsace Lorraine, about which everybody was agreed, the fact that German and Russian territories were allocated at random has been no small obstacle to peace. Responsible Ministers in the victorious countries spoke, in defiance of logic and fact, of reparations amounting to two hundred and fifty, three hundred, or even five hundred milliard gold marks, and that is why a ludicrous policy was long pursued towards Germany, whilst at the same time many pernicious illusions were fostered among the victors, illusions from which they are still suffering.

✧ Germany underwent the severest privations, and she restored her currency. Ejected everywhere, she is everywhere resuming her position by means of persevering work and discipline. She has

attained what perhaps she lacked before the war—a profound consciousness of unity; through many errors she has created a democracy; she has shown an invincible determination to live. And thereupon everything changed. The ridiculous economic claims vanished. The Dawes plan has taken their place, which is what I proposed in 1919 and 1920, and which at that time met with unfounded opposition.

In 1920, as President of the San Remo Conference, I proposed, in agreement with Lloyd George, to put an end to useless military occupation and extravagant claims, and to reach an understanding with the Germans on a serious and dependable reparations scheme. The resignation of my Government caused my proposal to fall to the ground. But after several years it nevertheless became necessary to resort to the Dawes plan; so that what ought to have been done by the free initiative of the victors had to be accepted under American pressure.

Even if, as Cassel and Keynes think, the Dawes plan is not workable in its entirety, it is at least logical, and every effort must be made to work it in good faith.

As a result, the agreements of Locarno have been signed, and Germany has been invited to join the League of Nations. Even the blindest have realised that the absence of Germany, together with Russia and the United States of America,

meant that the League of Nations had no effective existence

Were so many errors necessary in order to begin to see the truth? And are so many still necessary in order to reach the conviction that Europe will never have peace without a *direct*, sincere, and loyal understanding between France and Germany?

Russia had been excluded from the civilised world, she might no longer trade with Europe, she was condemned to perish

She resisted by force of arms, she was victorious. Immediately there was a scramble to recognise her

Turkey was persecuted in the most cruel fashion, and after banishing her to Asia Minor, the European Powers still wanted to hand over the best of her territory to Greece. After Turkey's military victories these Powers left Greece to her fate and her internal revolts

But Turkey has secured the abolition of the infamous capitulations and has recovered her liberty

What would have happened if Germany, Turkey, and Russia had given way and collapsed?

Is force, then, the only power ruling in Europe after so many declarations for freedom and peace? Must all mistakes be made before repentance is possible? And may it not be that popular extremist tendencies cover a justifiable mistrust of

the works of governments? Finally, do not the governments and the Conservative parties bear the heaviest responsibility for all that has happened and may yet happen?

It is easy for us to explain events by means of Bolshevism and the fear of revolution. But what is Bolshevism, if not the consequence of two unsuccessful wars, of the imperialist policy of Tsarist Russia, and of the unending train of crimes and acts of violence of which Tsardom was guilty? Who are the Bolsheviks—even though we reproach them for serious errors—but the victims of yesterday's persecution, rebels against the despotism of Nicholas II and the tyranny of the Russian Church?

People are surprised to find a large number of Jews amongst the Bolsheviks, and the reactionary Press regards this as a new reason for hatred and a new cause of anti-Semitism. But has anyone forgotten the atrocities of anti-Semitism? Were not the Jewish pogroms in Russia in the time of the Tsar arranged by the Government itself?

Europe is still inclined to continue in the errors which led to the war—that is why she cannot attain peace. But European Capitalism is largely responsible for what has happened; reinforced by the army of war profiteers, it proves itself more and more knavish and cynical, and in fact speculates on the alleged fascination of Bolshevism.

Bolshevism would exercise no attraction, no *fascination over the working masses, if there were*

not such profound causes of discontent, if poverty and ignorance did not afflict men's minds, and, most important of all, if force were not still the basis of political and social relations in the majority of European States

XII

Bolshevism and Fascism regarded as identical phenomena—Checks on freedom and criticisms of parliamentary action—Impossible to imagine that despotic governments can endure in present-day society

IN the present phase of the life of Europe Bolshevism and Fascism represent the two absolute negations of Liberal institutions and democracy. Fascism is an incident in White reaction; Bolshevism is a Communist experiment. Far from contradicting one another, the two systems have much in common, although they are at opposite poles. It is characteristic of Italian Fascists that they admire Bolshevism and tend to imitate its methods; it is equally characteristic of the Moscow Government that it has several times shown sympathy with Fascism, and is always on cordial terms with it.

Probably the Bolsheviks think that Fascist violence will give rise to a revolutionary movement.

In Italy to-day one finds that greater tolerance is shown to Communists affiliated to Moscow than to Liberals, democrats, and Socialists.

Opposition in every form is crushed and persecuted, but for the purposes of domestic policy it is convenient that only Communist opposition

should be apparent. The wealthy classes are led to believe that Communism would triumph if the dictatorship ceased.

In both systems, Bolshevism and Fascism, there is an intolerant armed minority domineering in the State and effectively destroying all sincere expression of the popular will. Force dominates all legal relations and does away with all spontaneous expression of consent.

Throughout Europe there are people who incline to one or other of these systems. What characterises all rule which repudiates order is its need to expand abroad. For several years the Bolsheviks cherished the illusion that they would spread revolution everywhere, the Fascists, using the same methods and seeking support from the reactionary parties, cherish the illusion that they will establish movements of violent reaction everywhere.

The former attempt has done great harm in Europe, but it has not succeeded, the latter will do even more harm, or at least as much, but neither will it succeed.

Just as there has been no world-wide revolution, so there will be no world-wide reaction.

Ignorant people (and unhappily they are the majority, even in the self-styled ruling classes) often lack the intelligence necessary to understand the blessings of freedom.

In order to understand and appreciate the benefits of economic liberty and free trade a

groundwork of serious economic study is needed. But Protection appears to produce wealth without labour and to lessen competition and the evils which it causes, and so it attracts not only manufacturers but often, too, the leaders of the working class.

Before I was head of the Italian Government as Prime Minister, I was Minister of Commerce for a long time, and then Finance Minister. I often came across capitalist speculators and working-class leaders who joined in demanding protectionist laws and defensive tariffs. When I pointed out the dangers I saw that they were respectfully inclined to regard me as a theorist. Especially great industrialists, like great bankers, are always apt to confuse their own business interests with the interests of the country.

Economic freedom alone allows production to expand considerably, and political freedom alone makes lasting progress possible and preserves the vital forces of every nation. But Conservative parties, and often, too, reformist parties, like the Socialists, fail to envisage this truth with precision. Freedom has to put up an effective defence against opposing forces, and these are not the only forces of reaction, as they once were, but often those of democratic extremism, embodied in Socialism. Often reaction and Socialism are an equal menace to freedom. Socialism requires freedom as a condition of its development, but when it has the power it tends towards proletarian dictatorships,

which are blind and violent. Thus Socialism and reaction are equally a menace to freedom, partly because the extremes of Socialism undermine the authority of the State and often imperil vital economic organisations, and so necessitate reaction, or at least incline people's minds towards reaction. It is due to the errors of Socialism that the doubting, the timid, and those who do not realise the dangers of reaction, do not oppose dictatorship when it appears.

It is very easy, too, to explain the Liberal crisis in a number of countries at this juncture in history, the break-up of the old traditional Liberal parties of all shades of opinion, democrats, Radicals, and Conservatives. This is why great Conservative parties are being established, sometimes based on reaction, and great democratic parties, based on Socialism.

Nevertheless, a change has come about in recent years which cannot fail to exercise a profound influence. On the one hand, the Socialists have become a Government party in many countries—indeed, in nearly all countries—and though they have experienced many doubts, they no longer stand for an absolute repudiation of the present economic system; Socialism is no more than an idea, a tendency to substitute the principles of co-operation and social union for the strict principles of Liberal individualism.

On the other hand, the great Labour organisa-

tions are everywhere becoming more and more trade union in character, and although they maintain their relations with Socialism and share in its development, they tend in practice to separate themselves from it

Many Liberal publicists—including the greatest of all, John Stuart Mill—had foreseen at an earlier date that the Liberal creed might harmonise with the development of social co-operation, and that the State must not limit its functions to defence and security.

Finally, Communism has adopted the earlier Socialist attitude and taken over its wholly negative function of opposing society as at present constituted, Socialist parties tend, therefore, to change into democratic parties—Labour parties—and to approximate in many of their ideas to the Liberal party. The Russian example no longer attracts the working masses irresistibly. It has, however, helped to establish a definitely anti national Communist party in many countries. Wherever, to-day, there is an anti national Communist party, the Socialists hold aloof from it and oppose it nearly as much as the Conservative parties—sometimes more. The Communists, for their part, regard Socialism with dislike as a middle-class, reformist movement, and hold it to be the extreme Left wing of Liberalism, a kind of new Radicalism.

This sharp distinction, this widening gulf between Labour and Communist parties—that is, between the

organised workers and Socialists on the one hand and the Communists on the other—cannot fail to push the Labour parties in the direction of democracy, and consequently of a Liberal regime—the only system under which a healthy democracy can live

Political parties in the existing Parliaments in Continental Europe are of such complexity that there is often no certainty of a stable and reliable majority for a single party. Party divisions are based not only on economic considerations and differing ideas of freedom, they are the outcome, also, of national demands, and of the political traditions of castes and classes which do not care to mix

Divergent parties may unite to defend freedom, and equally they may unite to defend nationality. Divergent parties may agree on a policy of social reform. There are countries where Catholic minorities and Socialists often join to fight for agreed policies. On the Continent many governments bring about agreements between Catholics and Socialists, democrats and Socialists, or Catholics and Liberals

The public, and more especially the opponents of the parliamentary system, who are almost as numerous among revolutionaries as among reactionaries, are inclined to consider these coalitions arbitrary and liable to restrict the Government's liberty of action

On the contrary, these coalitions are often not merely necessary but advantageous, because they bring about the fusion of views and interests which are frequently much nearer to one another than appears to be the case.

But it sometimes happens—and has long been happening in England—that the disappearance of two great traditional parties, and the existence of a number of parties, make it really difficult to set up a stable Government. In certain countries we have watched Ministerial crises dragging on for weeks and months. We have seen almost the same thing happen in France, Belgium, and Germany, and we have watched Ministry follow Ministry in rapid succession, faced with serious problems and great financial troubles, whilst none dared apply effective remedies and deal resolutely with the true difficulties. Reactionary parties have argued from this against the parliamentary system, which, they say, does not meet modern needs. But what could be put in the place of Parliaments except an individual despot?

As a general rule all reaction begins with discrediting Parliaments. From century to century the language of reaction is always the same, just as the language of despotism is always the same. Despotism, whether it is exercised by a small group of individuals or a single individual, always makes the mistake of confusing and identifying itself first with the State and then with the nation. Despots

and dictators of all ages have always claimed that their intentions were the best they wanted to save the nation from anarchy and disorder, and they wanted to surround themselves with the best men. If they failed to do good, the fault lay with their opponents, who paralysed their actions.

It is characteristic of the spirit of despotism and reaction that it perpetually and bitterly throws discredit on Parliament. The parliamentary system is always charged with weakness and impotence. People always discuss the evil effects of individual and party clashes. But no one considers that an even greater weakness is inherent in every despotism, because in order to survive it must create a number of private interests and develop parasitism in all its forms.

Under a free regime every action in the life of the State is subject to control, all expenditure involves responsibility. If there are troubles they almost always appear on the surface. Often, indeed, party strife tends to exaggerate them. But what happens where there is no control, and where the Press is not free?

Parliament often includes many members of mediocre ability, many weaklings and corrupt persons, but there are always men of honour and energy, ready to prevent corruption and expose the most serious scandals. And it is thanks to these resolute and honourable men that many faults and errors are avoided.

Where there is a dictatorship Parliament does not function freely, there are also financial abuses. Great financiers, and especially those of Wall Street, do not conceal their sympathies with European dictatorships. They incline towards reaction and think that any reactionary movement, even the worst, is to be preferred to the great democratic currents of thought. They are doing an evil deed, and they are even doing a bad stroke of business, which, for financiers, is worse. They should be prepared for surprises.

The finances of European countries under dictatorship are a mystery. Probably they are on the road to bankruptcy, in spite of appearances.

In Spain there are no longer any genuine budgets, and the figures published are not correct. I have ascertained that even the figures concerning armaments furnished to the League of Nations for the *Military Year Book* are falsified. The expenditure for the Moroccan campaign is given as 279 million pesetas for 1924-25. That is ridiculous. The lowest cost of a soldier in the field is from 15 pesetas a day upwards, and there is in addition the cost of war material, transport, etc. Latterly Spain has always had from 150,000 to 200,000 soldiers in Morocco. Even if we reckon an inclusive cost of 25 pesetas for each soldier, that amounts to 50 millions a day, or nearly two milliards per year. And the figure was given as 279 millions!

According to information which I have pro-

cured, Spanish Treasury issues from October 15, 1925, to February 4, 1926, amounted to 3,537 million pesetas. That is the road to bankruptcy!

The true Spanish budget for this year shows a deficit of 845 millions, and the cost of the Moroccan war has still to be liquidated. But if one takes the official figures for 1924-25, one finds 2,777 millions of receipts against barely 2,570 millions in expenditure. And the total for Morocco is calculated at 279 millions!

Military dictatorship makes a practice of falsehood.

In Italy Fascism profits by the taxation which Giolitti and I imposed. But according to a decree the surplus is allocated almost entirely to extraordinary military expenditure. By this means it is made to appear that ordinary military expenditure has been reduced and that there is a budgetary surplus. Another decree compels manufacturers to pay into the Treasury all money which they receive in undepreciated currency. Thus loans to the manufacturers do not serve to buy raw materials, they are destined for the Treasury.

It is impossible to discuss the finance of countries under dictatorship. There is always mystery. In free countries crises are foreseen and discussed, and remedies are sought with the co-operation of the public. In countries under dictatorship crises are shrouded in mystery, and when they actually come they always plunge the nation in disaster.

The great financial development of modern nations is a direct result of the liberal system

Without Parliaments and without the freedom of the Press there can be no progress, no honest finance, no stable economic development. Without the freedom of the Press and the parliamentary platform no progress is possible in the ethics of public life

There are doubtless forms of opposition which paralyse and others which are a burden, but it is none the less true that without opposition and freedom, in other words without Parliament and without a free Press, nothing great can be accomplished in modern society

No reasonable man can fail to see the faults and errors of Parliaments. But none of the critics of Parliaments has suggested anything to take their place—the despotic rule of bygone monarchies? The system which existed in Germany and in Austria Hungary? The White dictatorship of Fascism or the Red dictatorship of Bolshevism?

We must not forget one fundamental truth when absolute power was held by Divine right (*non est potestas nisi a Deo*), it commanded respect because men, or at least the majority of them, honestly believed that the sovereign was entrusted by God with the duties of government. But in modern nations, where the people no longer acknowledge a religious foundation for political power, where all have lost that reverence which

was the true basis of absolute monarchy, force alone can ensure the permanence of despotic rule—force, which lacks moral and religious sanction, and consequently is not itself permanent.

Parliamentary rule, on the contrary, can assure free institutions, and those institutions can assure the normal development of civilised life for the nations.

We often encounter, in speech or print, vague aspirations for a return to the forces of the past. But even if it were possible to re-establish monarchy, and if there were men capable of accomplishing such a task, would a despotic government be possible? Faced with the structure of great European States, where would men like Louis XIV, Frederick of Prussia, or Napoleon be? Apart from the fact that they would be a powerful cause of disorder, they would lead their country, sooner or later, to disaster.

Further, it should be remembered that the immense growth of modern States in population, wealth, and organised industries, and the development of commerce and of the Press, rule out individual action of an extensive and enduring character.

Consider the France of Louis XIV at the height of her magnificence. She had no more than a third of her present population, and in 1648 the State budget did not exceed 184 millions. The men under arms were the merest fraction of her

present armies. There were no great public enterprises, no great collective activities, no great commercial organisations, no powerful trade unions.

Mankind loves to maintain the same prejudices and commit the same errors. Prejudices seem to dissolve as readily as clouds, but they reappear in different forms. Errors are tenacious of life and die by inches. They are remembered even when the causes which produced them are dissipated.

What would the return to authoritarian, monarchical forms imply?

Until the European war, or, more accurately, until the peace, there were three great despotic monarchies in Europe: the three vast and powerful continental empires—Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary. There were three different types of authoritarian State. They must correspond pretty nearly to the ideal of many nationalists and of most of the reactionary classes. Therefore those who attribute responsibility for the war—for the ruin of all Europe—to Germany and her allies want, according to their own declarations, to revert to the systems which produced that disaster. According to the official definition, Russia under Nicholas II was *a constitutional monarchy under an autocratic Tsar*. All power was concentrated in the Emperor's hands, in the hands of a mystic without intelligence or vigour. In reality, effective power lay in the hands of a small number of debauched Grand Dukes, dishonest

politicians (with a few exceptions), and courtiers of whom it is hard to say whether they were more infatuated or incompetent. Those who are unacquainted with the Russian Court need only read ambassadors' memoirs and the writings of officials in order to learn how absolutism may pervert the political and moral code. The Russian Court was dominated by every type of pettiness, corruption, sensuality, bigotry, military despotism, and so on. Such examples of degencracy as Rasputin would not be possible in a republic or a democracy, even at their worst and most corrupt. The two great disasters which visited autocratic Russia—the Japanese War (thoughtlessly undertaken) and the European War, unconsciously desired and declared, perhaps, without the consent of the Tsar—these are proof of the havoc which a despotic Government, corrupted and corrupting, may work.

According to the Constitution of April 16, 1871, Germany was a federal constitutional State under the supreme direction of the Emperor, in whom were vested the executive power and the right of making treaties and declaring war. Actually, in spite of the Bundesrat and the Reichstag—in spite of Parliament that is—the Emperor directed in person the foreign policy of the Empire. His Chancellors lived a largely extra parliamentary life. The German people, who had attained a high standard of culture and wealth, were in fact con-

trolled in their political activities by a handful of men in the Emperor's confidence. Is there anyone ready to praise the boorish outbursts of William II, or to declare that the actions of his advisers were beneficial to Germany?

Likewise in Austria-Hungary the Dual Monarchy concentrated most of the power in the hands of the Emperor. Francis Joseph reigned longer than any other modern sovereign in Continental Europe. He was a shrewd, crafty, and cynical bigot. During his long reign he succeeded only in stimulating, by his blind tyranny, the strife and rivalry between nationalities, and in daily lessening the power of his empire. I knew many of those who enjoyed the Emperor's confidence, governing a great country which comprised eleven different nationalities, they should have been enlightened and cultivated men. With a few exceptions I found among them only courtiers, more or less refined serving men, unscrupulous cynics, brainless reactionaries. Among those whose responsibility for the war was greatest must be reckoned the Prime Minister, Count Leopold Berchtold, Baron von Ungarschutz, Frating, and Putlitz. What was he but a cynical scoffer?

Is it to such a monarchy that the detractors of Parliament would return? And if not this, what then do they desire?

Can anyone still seriously admire and wish for the kind of elective empire of Napoleon III?

Even if we ignore all the unjust accusations made against Napoleon III we cannot but recognise that his short reign, which began as a dictatorship, ended, and was bound to end, in the national disaster of the war of 1870. The empire of Napoleon III, born of an intrigue and a *coup d'état*, was bound to nourish reaction at home and engage in an adventurous foreign policy in order to survive.

Nobody can wish for France a repetition of this gloomy page in her history.

And if neither legal nor extra legal monarchy is possible, can we rely on bourgeois or military dictatorships? Can such dictatorships be any help in overcoming post war difficulties under present conditions?

There are three examples of dictatorship in Europe—Russia, Spain, and Italy, not reckoning countries of less importance.

Nobody in the Conservative parties thinks to day of imitating Russia. Those who decry Parliaments have no desire to replace them with Soviets.

Can the example of Spain and Italy be followed?

I wish to discuss the question calmly.

Unhappily, instead of calm discussion we find in the papers with the widest circulation only perpetual disparagement of healthy vital forces and *continual praise of the methods of violence*.

I have frequently stressed the harm done by an influential section of the Press in modern democracies, not only by spreading inaccurate news, but

by stimulating passions whose prevalence must involve danger. Bad relations between the peoples, mistakes in foreign policy, the embitterment of domestic strife—all these are largely the work of the Press, or a section of it.

Politicians can seldom act independently of the Press, or at least independently of that section which supports their actions, and they are often compelled to act, not as their conscience and judgment dictate, but according to the demands of the Press. But the modern Press is a commercial enterprise before it is a platform of ideas, and it has adopted the methods of commerce, establishing syndicates and concluding understandings and agreements. The same individuals and industrialists control a number of organs, often expressing various shades of opinion. There are democratic countries where a large part of the Press belongs to the same person or persons, so that all independent judgment is lost.

The war created vast and sudden fortunes; *there is a class of war profiteers who rose to the surface almost at a moment's notice.* This fungus rooted in the new European civilisation is poisonous, as others are.

All domination, even that of wealth, presupposes education and tradition, and the new rich are as a rule without tradition and without education; and they make bad enough use of their wealth. They are inclined to glorify reaction, warlike adventures,

the acquisitive spirit Their influence has helped in certain countries to lower the tone of the Press and destroy its dignity of character, and this state of affairs has hampered the expression of healthy public opinion, which is an essential condition of free democratic government

It is difficult to develop this argument without pointing to individuals and falling foul of powerful interests But I know countries where the most influential and widely circulated journals are distributed among groups belonging to a few bankers and industrialists Papers whose political views appear to differ draw their capital from the same source, and support the same errors and the same interests

It is true that in every country, even those which are most corrupted by a pernicious Press, there are independent journals, honourable in all their dealings But they are not the majority, nor have they the widest circulation

One of the most influential of the causes which brought about the war and, what is more important, which now keep alive bad feeling between the peoples, is the poisonous Press, which makes *rapprochement* difficult and encourages bitterness and suspicion

It is a difficult problem to solve, but it is also one which democracies must face, if they wish to place freedom and peace on a firm foundation (and freedom will not long endure without peace)

XIII

The growth of the middle classes and resistance to extremist tendencies

WE now stand at a point where modern democracies must choose their path, take stock of their position, and give serious thought to the imminent dangers which threaten them. In consequence of the war the idea of *freedom* is in danger of being ousted by the idea of *force*. Force in the service of an idea is an element of progress. Regarded as a means of domination, as the self assertion of groups or castes or individuals, it is nothing but a reversion to mediæval ideas, and can only have the effect of evoking a counter display of force—in other words, of establishing something like a permanent state of revolution and war.

If we rule out the idea of reverting to absolute, authoritarian monarchy, which nobody would venture to suggest seriously, if we rule out the idea of elective monarchies, which are apt to be hare brained adventures, then it only remains to inquire whether civilised States can aim at a type of reactionary dictatorship, as in Spain and Italy, or of Red dictatorship, as in Russia.

I have said what I think on the subject. But perhaps it may be useful to consider once again these examples of dictatorship

The Spanish dictatorship is of little interest, historically or æsthetically. It will not survive long. General Primo de Rivera is not a new type; he is one of the many generals of the Central American Republics. Indeed, no political principle, still less any ethical idea, guided the insignificant Spanish crisis in which constitutional rule was overthrown with the connivance of the King himself.

Though General Primo de Rivera has surrounded himself with men of the type of General Anido, there is nothing of the classical tyrant about him. He has not caused his political opponents' houses to be broken into, he has had no Opposition deputy beaten, or attacked, or assassinated.

The King of Spain wanted a little military *coup d'état*, it is very likely that another military *coup d'état* will shortly restore at least a certain measure of order and freedom.

Spain has rich natural resources and a proud people, and she will recover after a fresh crisis. As to whether the monarchy will survive or fall, that is a question of quite minor importance. But this much can be said with certainty. the dictatorship has done no service to the monarchy—it has allowed insane military enterprises which

are exhausting the resources of Spain, and it has violated the Constitution

There are only two types of dictatorship which are of interest to Europe and the civilised world—Fascism and Bolshevism—and they are different forms of the same system of government, they are of great importance

For some time Russian Bolshevism had great attractions for the working masses. Now it has lost its fascination almost entirely. The dictatorship of the proletariat, like all dictatorships, has been cruel. It was driven to destroy not only all freedom, but all individual security. A dictatorship, if it is to resist its opponents, must place self-defence before all other considerations, and since there is nothing to hamper it, it devotes most of its energies to this task of self-defence, which amounts in practice to the suppression of its opponents

Bolshevism is a purely Russian phenomenon. Only a people emerging from centuries of tyranny such as Tsardom could abandon themselves to so violent a revolution, to so complete a repudiation of the past

The measure of a people's resistance to revolutionary perils, and of its power in peace and war, is the size and culture of its middle class. But there was, and still is, in Russia a vast illiterate population of peasants, who were no more than serfs but yesterday, and under Tsarist rule there

was only a small privileged class, which controlled the administrative services and the army. Corruption and intrigue were the basis of social relations in governmental circles, as happens in varying degrees under all absolute monarchies. But the cultivated and intelligent middle class was small, and the more active workers were the victims of suspicion and persecution.

When I speak of the middle class I do not mean what the Socialists often mean—namely, a class possessing capital. I mean the great class which does not live by manual labour, which directs industry and agriculture and commerce, or is engaged in public or private administrative work, or in one of the liberal professions. The more numerous and cultured this middle class is, the surer are the foundations of social life.

Russia had no middle class, or, more accurately, the middle class was small in number and at the earliest stage of its development. This is the sole reason why the nation was unable to form staffs of officers during the war and to resist the forces of dissolution after the war. Russia was victorious neither in war nor in peace. Just as she could not replace the officers she had lost for the lack of trained men, so she could not stand against the wave of revolution because she had no middle class of any account.

Because they had a strong and cultured middle class, great democratic countries like Britain and

the United States of America were able to improvise large armies when war came, although they had no real armies at first, and all progressive, highly civilised nations were in a position to resist revolutionary tendencies after the war.

Thus Bolshevism is a purely Russian phenomenon, in spite of Communist propaganda efforts it has not the faintest chance of finding imitators.

Russia never had freedom, neither to-day nor in the past. She has often adopted the methods of the past in establishing Communist rule.

Nevertheless, whatever the errors of Bolshevism may be, the present system will benefit the Russian people more than the tyranny of *un irrécusable* like Nicholas II, whose miserable end cannot make us forget altogether his errors and shortcomings. By giving the land to the peasants Bolshevism is building up a rural democracy of cultivating owners on the ruins of the great landed estates of the past. The Grand Dukes—*assassins* and reactionaries like the Grand Duke Nicholas, or unscrupulous debauchees like many of the others—are but pitiable ghosts from the past when they claim the rights of royalty. For the people all the errors of Bolshevism are preferable to the horrors of Tsardom.

Moreover, the Communist rulers are making fresh concessions daily to the productive forces of Capitalism, and the problem of setting Russia

on her feet and exploiting her immense natural resources is one which concerns all nations to-day. It is to the interest of all that Russia should emerge from the rule of violence.

At any rate, the Russian regime, about which the labouring masses continued for some time to cherish illusions, is losing much of its prestige. If there are Bolshevik agents, if, as the Press declares, Moscow seeks, or has sought in recent years, to sow the seeds of revolution everywhere, the result is so modest that it may be regarded as negligible. If there were not so much insecurity, so much unemployment in England and Germany, such great financial difficulties in other Continental countries, if everybody were not thinking of the possibility of fresh wars, Russian Bolshevism would lose all significance abroad and the Communist parties all prospect of growth.

If Russian Bolshevism has not the possibility of spreading in Europe, through the agitation of revolutionary groups, neither, I think, can Italian Fascism, which is based on the same principles but pursues contrary aims, spread through the agitation of reactionaries. They sympathise with Fascism and support it wholeheartedly, regarding it as a manifestation of reaction, but they cannot provide it with the conditions necessary for its development.

Fascism has used force to crush all opposition in Parliament, in the Press, in local activities. It

is already passing through a severe crisis. Opposition, prohibited in the country, raises its head within the party and undermines it.

Fascism has conquered the State by force and must now hold it by force, consequently it must resort to threats. The highest posts are given to men of mediocre ability and education, not on account of their merits but because they can use force.

At the same time, as I have already said, there are two tendencies, two minds, in Fascism. The leader of the party, Mussolini, and his closest collaborators, who had been revolutionaries all their lives, not only retain their old mentality, but perhaps also a common hope of a return to the people. The nationalists, on the contrary, incline towards reaction.

The Fascist chief has been able to wield such great power partly by reason of his personal qualities, but also because his knowledge of labour influences and revolutionary circles has enabled him to act effectively. Reaction everywhere and always comes more easily when it is the work of men of revolutionary origin, who apply in a contrary direction the methods of demagoguery that they have always used.

Thus Italian Fascism remains an isolated phenomenon. We may prophesy that it, too, will find no imitators and cannot endure.

✓ Where it persists in its present methods of

violence it is bound to provoke a reaction, of which the limits cannot be foreseen, or else—but this is less likely—it will shed its present methods little by little, and will return to constitutional ways. At any rate, Fascism is rather the outcome of individual notions than a policy, it is rather an echo from the methods of the past than a prophecy of future systems. It is conquest, not government. It is the exercise of power, not lawful authority.

✓ Its worship of force, its scorn for the higher forms of intelligence, its hatred of freedom, its intolerance of any sign of opposition—all these must render its power transient, and any imitation of it absurd.

Freedom and democracy were too new in Italy not to be exposed to danger. Italy presents the historical paradox of one of the most ancient civilisations, together with a State too young to possess traditions. This contrast explains the course of events.

The Italian State has had a short history as yet, and Italy attained her unity but recently. Until 1860 she was divided into a number of States, almost all under despotic rule. Lombardy was under Austrian rule until 1860, and Venetia until 1866. The largest kingdom, that of the two Sicilies, was long under Spanish control, and in the Spanish Bourbons it had a vulgar and degraded Royal House. There were tyrants in other States in the peninsula, and

many were under the control of Austria Hungary
In Rome the Papacy held sway till 1870

For centuries England has had free parliamentary government France overthrew her despotic Government in 1879 Even Germany had long had her centre of gravity in a great united State, Prussia Belgium and Holland suffered much for the sake of independence, but they, too, long ago secured their freedom on an enduring basis

It is the Piedmont Constitution of 1848, extended after 1860 and again in 1870 to the other States in the peninsula, which holds good to day, or rather which no longer holds good since the advent of Fascism, because, as Dante said, it *remains only to cause waste of paper* It is only when we remember that the youngest of the nations, the United States of America, has long enjoyed unity and so has a long tradition of government, and that her Constitution dates from 1787, that we can explain the sharp paradox in Italian national life an intelligent, hard working, and active people reverting for a time to the political systems of the past

But what is possible in Italy is not possible elsewhere, in countries where there is a large middle class and where the working classes are resolved to fight sooner than be deprived of their rights

There are countries where democracy is firmly established, and where a Fascist rising would not only have no chance of success, but would be

crushed by universal scorn before it could raise its head the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Switzerland

The three countries which exercise the greatest influence on the life of Europe—Britain, France, and Germany—have, it is true, reactionary movements, but none of them could now adopt the methods and ways of Fascism without encountering the universal hostility of public opinion. None of the attempts that have been made have succeeded. Even in France nationalist opinion holds aloof from Fascism. In Belgium a little Fascist effort roused such hostility and opposition among the Catholic and Socialist workers that the initiators of the movement lost all desire to carry it on. It would be absurd to speak of Fascist tendencies in the United States of America. The most distinguished men in the United States judge Italian *Fascism* so severely, as an example of perversion, that nobody could dream of importing into America this decadent movement, inspired by the methods of an inferior civilisation.

I am convinced that Russian Bolshevism, which can be accounted for by economic and social conditions peculiar to Russia, and Italian Fascism, which can be accounted for by Italy's particular tradition and situation, are isolated phenomena, and cannot possibly reappear in other nations, where the conditions which produced them are absent.

Mankind must go astray in order to learn that it is straying. A profound thinker has said that the path of humanity is never straight; it is a winding mountain path. Sometimes advance involves retrogression. Mankind advances by climbing painfully up the side of a steep mountain.

After all these wanderings, we must inevitably return to freedom and the Liberal system.

XIV

The need of reform in parliamentary procedure and industrial policy

WHATEVER we may say, there is an element of irrefutable truth in criticisms of parliamentary activities and the discontent prevalent in countries under parliamentary rule, and democracy must submit to reform.

The instability of executive authority in certain countries has become serious, Ministries change so rapidly that occasionally they have not even time to grasp the difficulties which it is their task to overcome. In many countries there have been Ministerial crises lasting for months. There are, too, fluctuating majorities which paralyse every attempt to act. When one considers how easily a rich and powerful country like France might have solved her financial problems, and then watches the long continued uncertainty of the measures taken by Parliament, one must acknowledge that many criticisms are well founded. But it is one thing to criticise, another to solve the problem.

In 1830 France had a budget of 1,095 million francs, and in 1860 2,084 million. In Great Britain State expenditure amounted in 1809 to £72

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millions sterling, in 1865-66 to £65 millions sterling, and at the end of the nineteenth century to £133 millions sterling

What are these figures compared with present day budgets? They are far less than the interest on the national debt since the war!

Everywhere the State has developed its functions, it conducts large industries and enterprises, it enters upon fresh undertakings every day

The cradle of Parliaments, Great Britain, had only a small population when the parliamentary system reached its zenith. England and Wales had only five million inhabitants in 1688, six million in 1740, rather under nine million in 1801. But even after the treaties of 1919, which parcelled out Europe, there remains one European country with a population of more than 150 millions—Russia, one with a population of more than 60 millions—Germany, three with more than 40 millions apiece—Great Britain, France, and Italy

But even in small countries the complexity of economic relations, the growth of public expenditure, the extension of public services, have acquired such importance that we can no longer regard the resulting situation in the light of the old democratic ideas. The Government is too heavily burdened with responsibilities, with industrial enterprises, with technical services, to be able to undergo continual changes, or to confide adminis-

trative offices to incompetent Ministers — fairly incompetent at least

No spectacle is sadder in the European Parliaments of to day than men of poor ability controlling great services, of whose nature and scope they are ignorant, and nothing does more harm than the spectacle of these men changing and succeeding one another with startling rapidity by the vicissitudes of political life

Party considerations, too, often override the test of competence Too often Ministers not only lack technical knowledge, but are even unfitted for administrative duties This causes a slackness in public services and perpetual waste, to say nothing of other bad effects Thus parliamentary government often becomes too costly

It is too slow in its movements as well Large joint stock companies have, in addition to the shareholders' meeting and Board of Directors, special committees which can act rapidly without wasting too much time and money But no joint stock company, however important, is so great and important as the State, and there dilatory and disorderly methods cause greater damage

What is most disastrous is instability Ministers are too often obliged to live in a perpetual attitude of self defence, and to devote their energies far more to defending their own position than to the work of administration Too often Parliament becomes an oratorical tournament, where quickness

of tongue, ingenuity, and sometimes less worthy qualities, count for more than real talent and ability.

The United States of America have adopted the presidential system, and all the other American States have followed their example. The President is elected for four years, and he wields sovereign executive power. Ministers are in reality only secretaries to the President, and they cannot be members either of Congress (that is, the Lower House) or of the Senate. They are chosen by the President almost entirely on account of their ability and because they inspire confidence. Thus the two Chambers perform their legislative functions without troubling about the Ministry. The President's powers, though very wide, are limited by the Constitution and by custom, especially in matters of foreign policy, where the Senate exercises very effective control. Real secret diplomacy is almost impossible in the United States of America, where it is the right of the Senate to know of every act which may lay the State under any obligation. Even the appointment of ambassadors and ministers abroad and of consuls must be confirmed by the Senate.

No doubt the presidential system also has many drawbacks, but it guarantees stability for the labours of the Government for the relatively lengthy period of four years.

In Great Britain the existence of the great

traditional parties, the Conservatives and Liberals—or at present Conservatives and Labour—confers a certain measure of stability on the Government, and relative independence on the Ministers

(1) But hardly anywhere on the Continent of Europe, in countries with free institutions, has a system yet been found which at once guarantees genuine parliamentary control and also allows more effective power to the Executive, and ensures, with effective power, rapidity of action

Yet, with all their faults, Parliaments are a permanent necessity. Without a system of direct representation we cannot imagine a government as the sincere expression of the popular will, enjoying the country's confidence. But how to organise Parliament, and how to make government stable and efficient, is the great problem of modern democracy. We must spare no effort to solve that problem if we do not want the parliamentary system to degenerate, and in degenerating to compromise the very existence of free institutions.

Another problem which touches the very existence of freedom and is vital to democracy is that of the growing participation of the workers in social struggles and political activities. In other words, it remains to be seen whether freedom, after centuries of struggle against despotism, will have to struggle again against the power arising from new forms of united labour with socialistic tendencies.

It cannot be denied that in almost all countries the Liberal party long showed deplorable indifference concerning labour problems, and that popular movements and the rise of Socialism were needed to change its policy. Even now Conservative and Liberal parties often have a merely negative social policy.

To-day they no longer stand isolated against isolated workers; immense agglomerations of capital face immense unions of labour; the principles of social solidarity have penetrated the individualism of former days; and now it is no longer possible to stand aside.

Where there is a large middle class, numerous and highly educated, the coalition of Liberal and democratic parties with Labour parties is far easier than in backward countries. In countries where there is a numerous peasantry, owning and cultivating the soil, and where the middle classes in industry and commerce and the liberal professions represent vast and strongly organised interests, there the forces of social conservation are so strong that freedom has nothing to fear.

There is no ultimate contradiction between the principle of liberty and the fundamental principle of labour policy, as expressed in the great trade unions. Labour, regarded as a moral principle rather than an economic agent, aspires to greater influence, and there is nothing in this aspiration contrary to the principles of liberty.

Is it possible that the middle classes, the great working bourgeoisie, and the labouring classes organised in trade unions will pursue an agreed policy and establish powerful and enduring democracies?

That is what would certainly have happened already but for the war, and that is what will happen if the menace of war disappears. A policy of power on the part of the State is always incompatible with a policy of evolution. The peril of war not only tends towards unified control, but subordinates all activities to the one aim.

The instability which prevails at present is a direct contradiction of the stability of free institutions and democracy. Political freedom means that all citizens have the same political rights, that executive authority emanates from the will of the majority, and that it is subject to the control of independent assemblies and organs of democracy. Regarded in this light, Bolshevism and Fascism are a total negation of freedom. Democracy does not mean simply a system of government which rules out all privileges of birth and all acquired advantages. Democracy means a system of government under which all citizens may share in the national life, freely according to their capacity. Regarded in this light, too, Bolshevism and Fascism are a total negation of democracy.

XV

*The decadence of Europe due to the spirit of violence
and the absence of peace and freedom The ir-
reversible ruin of the Liberal regime*

DIVIDED as Europe now is, and passing through a series of economic and political crises, she cannot recover prosperity and peace unless she reverts to the principles of democracy and freedom. Instability reigns supreme in international relations. As we have shown, an unstable government always predisposes men's minds to violence. Freedom calls for a tranquil life, and democracies cannot be healthy and industrious in the midst of threats of war, revolution, and reaction.

If I repeat my insistence on the ill-effects of a pernicious Press, especially that maintained by war profiteers (who in Italy are described by the expressive term "sharks"), it is because between the nations words instil hatred more deeply than deeds. Nor, indeed, is it ever possible to distinguish clearly between words and deeds. Nothing is more likely than words to instigate deeds. We often end by believing what we fancy and doing what we believe.

In the lives of individuals as of nations words

and attitudes of mind are as important as deeds they are the cause of actions

There are clashes of interest and losses which can be forgotten, it is far more difficult to forget insults to our dignity. If my neighbour and I have a dispute on a matter of material interest, and if our dispute leads us into a long and costly lawsuit, we can forget it all and be reconciled, but if I offend my neighbour's honour, his dignity, his feelings, the offence will never be forgotten

When we go on after the war saying that the Germans are modern Huns, *Boches*, enemies of civilisation, and that the Rhine is the frontier of civilisation, we may be sure that these insults will not be forgotten even when our behaviour changes. Nevertheless, the German Press, especially the nationalist Press, often replies with even greater and more regrettable violence

In peace, words precede deeds and sentiments precede words. I have never overstressed the importance of the Locarno agreements, particularly since they were followed by a series of lamentable blunders in the League of Nations—blunders which did all that could be done to weaken their effect. But it is not the outward fact of the agreements that matters most, it is rather the sentiment which gave them birth, and even more the change of language which they brought about and which has been noticeable for some time past

The fact that the victor nations in Europe are

still disputing amidst their many difficulties is due less to war losses than to the losses caused by a disturbed equilibrium and the lack of solidarity amongst the peoples of Europe. It is not enough to produce, we must have commercial exchange, that is to say, others must produce too. Just as each nationalist movement calls forth rival nationalist movements, so Protection in any one country causes fresh protectionist measures elsewhere.

Not only has Europe as a whole become a debtor continent, but many believe that nothing but American intervention can now help to re-establish Europe. Such a confession of weakness is really humiliating. History records no collapse in Europe on so vast a scale as that which followed the war of 1914-18.

Has America an interest in the re-establishment of Europe? I think we may answer this question in the affirmative (but with many reservations, perhaps), yet America has an even greater interest in keeping out of European affairs until peace is firmly established. There are political interests which at a distance override economic interests and for those same economic interests there is no security so long as peace rests on so fragile a basis.

Europe is, and will long remain, America's greatest market, now that illusions about expansion in the Pacific are largely dissipated, it is, therefore, altogether to America's interest to stimulate

the European market. Asian markets, of which we have heard such exaggerated accounts, are proving more and more to be unreliable and weak in purchasing power. Little Holland alone consumes more American goods than China and India together—more, that is, than a population greatly exceeding the whole of Europe. It is, then, to America's interest that Europe should be restored to health, and she must greet with sympathy any thing calculated to help in creating a great European market—an end of wars, domestic disorders, and Fascist adventures, the formation of customs unions and vast commercial combines, and so on.

But America's interests are essentially economic, by which I mean that, though America joined in the war for the defence of certain principles, she could never associate herself with the interests and policy of one European group against other groups or nations in Europe. Indeed, America regards with justifiable suspicion everything which prolongs the present state of confusion in Europe—revolutions and domestic reactionary movements and the moral, if not yet material, preparation for fresh wars.

The word "credit" is derived from a word meaning "belief" or "faith"—in the present phase of European politics America has no faith in Europe.

It is the greatest mistake to speak of America as something alien to Europe. America is *the New Europe*.

When we speak of Asia and Africa, of the two most ancient continents, in which the earliest and greatest civilisations flourished, we speak of other peoples, different races, civilisations of ancient and distant origin. But America is a recent growth, the creation of the peoples of Europe: it was European emigrants who built up America. There is no American civilisation, but only a transatlantic European civilisation; except in certain economic characteristics, this civilisation is nowise different from our own. The New Europe has reached a far higher standard of wealth and power, she has no occasion to think of war, and is able, therefore, to devote much greater energies to the task of production; for this reason she is advancing every day towards the position of world hegemony once held by the Old Europe; and the Old Europe, toil-worn and torn by dissension, cannot renew her vigour, restore her fortunes, and recover her credit and her power, unless she returns to the paths of peace. The problems of freedom and of peace are akin; either we shall have a permanent state of revolution, reaction, and war, resulting in the downfall of Europe, or we shall return to democracy, freedom, and peace.

But this cannot come about unless a mighty intellectual and emotional movement arises, and in all countries, victors and vanquished alike, a love of the new order even more than a belief in

it inspires the middle classes—the working bourgeoisie—and the labouring masses

Only peace, freedom, and federalism can pave the way for new economic and political organisations

And instead of this we see to day forces making for war, for White and Red reaction, for nationalism, which is the very antithesis of any kind of federal system. Where has federalism actually developed farthest? Is it not in the country where each social group, differing from the rest in race, religion, or speech can develop its faculties freely and without opposition? In Switzerland, besides deep religious differences, seventy per cent of the population is German, twenty per cent French, and about ten per cent Italian or Romansch. The war and the peace have proved the quality of Swiss national staying power. This national consciousness has grown up under free and federal rule.

For many of the peoples of Central Europe there is no salvation but in federalism. The Poles resisted a prolonged effort to destroy their nationality on the part of powerful and expanding nations like the Russians and the Germans, can they so far delude themselves as to believe that they in turn can destroy the nationality of a German population of far higher culture and a Russian population with a far higher birth rate?

In a number of European countries the domestic problems of freedom cannot be finally solved,

unless at the same time problems of peace and international organisation are solved

Present-day outbreaks of reaction are only transitory phenomena. All that is happening is that the past is repeating itself, and it is a great mistake to confuse the past with the future. Europe can be saved only by a policy of peace, of freedom, and of federalism, in nations composed of a variety of races, and by freedom I mean the whole life of the free State, political freedom, economic freedom, freedom in every sphere of activity and social life.

Communism has been tested in Russia, and none but fanatics and those who harbour delusions can believe that it results in the increase of wealth. Socialist organisation itself is tending everywhere to change, more or less slowly, into a union for the defence of labour. There are many services which it can yet perform in this sphere. The tendency to establish personal and reactionary rule is merely the outcome of parliamentary confusion and international disturbances. Reaction, which is a reversion to the past, and Socialism, which is an extreme form of democracy, are not unforeseen developments; they are simply two great movements representing enduring impulses of the human spirit, and they grow stronger in the periods of distress and disorder which follow wars; when health returns they lose force. Active Socialist and reactionary movements are often a historical

necessity. But it is their function rather to stimulate and correct certain tendencies.

The Liberal regime, in its various aspects, is alone the permanent and ultimate form of all civilised societies which are raising their standards of life. It, too, is the only conservative form, in the noblest sense of the word, for it gives an outlet to all new energies and guarantees the free development of all activities.

I am convinced, therefore, that the Red and White reactionary Governments which have made their appearance in recent years are merely transitory phenomena, that they are simply consequences of the war, and have no chance of permanence.

In countries where there is a firmly established and mature middle class, freedom and democracy have nothing to fear. Post-war diseases will vanish slowly, but they will vanish. The Mediterranean fever which has scattered individual dictatorships in Southern Europe will abate, and then it, too, will vanish. Liberal and democratic institutions will emerge victorious and reinvigorated from their struggle against revolution, which is the secular miracle of ignorant minds, and against reaction, which is a return to barbarism.

Freedom and democracy are not of the past, they are of the future and the present crisis will render their triumph more certain and more irrevocable.

NOTES

PART of this study was published in Italy, with the title *La Libertà*, but the publisher, Piero Gobetti (another victim of the Fascists), was prevented from publishing it by an injunction of the Italian censorship, and it was printed afterwards by the firm of Carlo Accardi at Turin.

On July 28, 1925, at the invitation of the British Institute of Foreign Affairs, I gave an address in London on the subject of peace. Lord Merton was in the chair, and the discussion which followed my address gave me an opportunity of touching briefly on a number of questions of international political interest. On July 31st, at the invitation of the Liberal Summer School, I delivered an address on freedom at Cambridge. Mr John Maynard Keynes, of King's College, presided. The discussion which followed was very interesting. I have always held that the problems of freedom and of peace are inextricably linked. That is why I feel called upon to unite, in this little book, the essential points of the two addresses.

DEDICATION

The Sacred Phalanx was a secret society formed by Mazzini for the defence of freedom in 1860—*Translator's Note*

I

For two centuries freedom has been the subject of so much discussion, and the problems arising from it have been the occasion of so much controversy, that a bibliography would include practically all political literature. There is an excellent bibliographical summary in Guido de Ruggiero's book, *Storia del Liberalismo Europeo* (Bari, 1925).

II

I have discussed the Peace Treaties and the means of restoring European equilibrium at some length in my four books *L'Europe sans Paix*¹ (1922), *La Décadence de l'Europe*² (1923), *La Tragédie de l'Europe*³ (1924), *La Paix* (1925). The sole merit of these books, which have had more than seventy translations in Europe, America, and Asia, is that they destroyed those prejudices which are most inimical to peace.

III

Whichever nations bear the responsibility, or the chief responsibility, for the war (Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, etc.), it must be stated that the most deep seated cause was to be found in alliances, in secret diplomacy, and in the actions of a small handful of men.

Even if the war was inevitable (in view of the system of alliances, and the fact that the three great continental empires were in different groups, and that Russia, after her defeat in the Japanese War, was obliged to make war to escape internal dissolution), it was due to a mere handful of men that it was precipitated.

It is strange to what an extent foreign policy in all European countries has always been in the hands of a few men, and has been concealed, not merely from the public, but almost always from Parliament, and sometimes even from the Ministry.

In Italy treaties of alliance, including the Triple Alliance, were never known to Ministers of the Crown, nor submitted to them for approval. The decision to declare war in Libya in 1911, and to take part in the European War in 1915, was made without any consultation of the Cabinet.

¹ *Peaceless Europe* (Cassell, 12s.)

² *The Decadence of Europe* (Benn, 10s.)

³ *They Make a Desert* (Dent, 6s.)

IV

The two great architects of Italian unity, Mazzini and Cavour, and the greatest soldier of Italian independence, Garibaldi, always regarded freedom not merely as the supreme need, but as a *sine qua non* of true national existence. All Italians are acquainted with Cavour's ideals, which are those of Mill and the English Liberal school.

In a famous letter to P. Clanchette, Mazzini wrote as early as December 1832: "I love freedom, perhaps I love it even better than my country."

Garibaldi said that freedom is more sacred than all else, and that he preferred a free and poor fatherland to one rich and enslaved. "I would rather see it free and its palaces in ruins than cowering beneath the yoke of a barbarian."

The absence of freedom, and still more indifference to free institutions, are signs of irrevocable decadence in a civilised people. A nation which renounces freedom renounces its own greatness at the same time. A nation of serfs is never great.

V

There is no such thing as a nationalist creed; there are only nationalist utterances and nationalist policies. As a rule they are like the old type of Prussian Junkerdom.

The ideas proclaimed to day by nationalists, especially in Italy, are closely akin to those of pre-war German militarism. One recognises the same language, the same sentiments, and in particular the same poses.

The writings of the French nationalists—Barrès, Bourget, and chiefly Maurras, Daudet, and others—which are copied by the nationalists of other countries, particularly Italy, are very interesting from a literary point of view. But copied, often unskilfully, in other languages, they lose all artistic beauty and display a humiliating poverty of intellect, especially in the case of the Italian nationalists.

But the criticisms of the French nationalists, purified of exaggeration, contain observations worthy of notice and consideration.

The most authoritative Belgian Catholics have declared against nationalist teachings which destroy the very foundations of religious morality and seek to use religion as a means of political domination. A book of essays by the most eminent Catholics, collected and published under the title *Ces Messieurs, et ce n'est pas la Justice qui Lève*, is of interest as an indication of the trend of thought.

I have never read any publication which exposes the errors of nationalism more effectively than these Belgian Catholics. It is characteristic of Belgium that many professed Liberals, *libéraux*, who have neither a faith nor a philosophy, evince a certain sympathy for nationalism and even for Fascism whilst the Catholics and Socialists always show themselves mistrustful. It is the opinion of many distinguished Belgian publicists that nationalism (and consequently Fascism to a still greater extent) comes forward as a defender of the Church solely for political reasons.

From a doctrinal point of view, according to a distinguished Catholic writer, the principles of nationalism are akin to those of General Ludendorff, and are even more pagan, they give rise to amoral political ideas, and exercise a disastrous influence over the young. A young nationalist, wrote an eminent professor in a Catholic University, is 'angular, sharp, biting, peremptory'. Wherever they gain an entry the nationalists break up Catholic organisations.

In practice "we may put the question in this way: Will the Church or will she not agree when the leaders of *L'Action Française* on the one hand and the opponents of Christianity on the other identify, or affect to identify, *L'Action Française* with the Church? If the answer is 'yes,' then the cause of Christianity is lost among our peoples."

I have never read a more effective defence of Parliament or a truer criticism of the errors of absolutism than the essay by P. Pouillet, a former Prime Minister of Belgium, in the same volume.

He writes —

"Instead of devoting themselves to an intense propaganda effort in order to lead public opinion and the electorate to understand better what is the common good, and so securing the more efficient working of the parliamentary system, our young people prefer to condemn the parliamentary system itself

"Have they a better system to put in its place? They do not say, and as a rule they do not know

"When our young men wish to show us the ideal at which they aim, they never tell us what they mean to do in order to substitute the system of which they dream for that under which we live at present. To think of appealing to force for such a purpose would be to nourish the most insane delusion. But if they reject sudden force, do they not see that their expressions of disapproval are destined to remain ineffective, and that their words of condemnation are likely to be futile?

"The French Catholics have not bettered their position by standing aloof from the Republic, they will not succeed in bettering it by boycotting parliamentary institutions

"Moreover, these young men seem to me to misread the plainest lessons of history

"No human institution has ever worked without certain defects, certain errors, some wastage. How could imperfect man create perfect institutions, working without fault?

"I ask these young men to cast their minds back rapidly over the history of our country. Will they find, since the earliest Middle Ages, a single period when these provinces were blessed with an ideal Government, working irreproachably?

"Did the limited franchise which obtained in Belgium from 1830 to 1894 ensure public order, good will amongst the people, domestic peace, and economic prosperity, better than universal suffrage? Would it be better to return to the Constitution of William I, whose reign led up to the evolution of 1830? And the era of the Consulate and the Empire, when absolutism, so dear to the heart of youth,

shone in all its splendour—did that ensure the happiness and prosperity of the peoples? Was the old regime in Austria and Spain more perfect in idea and in operation than the present regime? Did everything work out for the best under Philip II, Charles V, or Philip the Good?

"Who would dare to make such a claim? But in that case we must acknowledge that there are not and never will be perfect institutions, functioning perfectly

"Our young people dream of strong authority exercised by a more or less absolute Monarch or a Dictator. But what assurance have they that this Monarch or this Dictator will be perfect? Yet they cannot shut their eyes to the fact that the play of intrigue and the influence of cliques are no less rife under absolute Monarchs and Dictators than under parliamentary institutions, and as a rule there is an absence of publicity, and that does at least prevent some abuses"

Pope Pius XI has consequently condemned nationalist doctrine in the most solemn manner (as being opposed to religion), and the movement known as *L'Action Française*

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The only hope of salvation for Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia lies in a federal system. But that cannot be brought about so long as nationalist tendencies hold sway. Yet in countries of racial complexity, nationalism is even more dangerous than in those which are racially uniform or have at least large racial groupings of population.

French or Italian nationalism is less dangerous than Polish, Czech, or Rumanian nationalism.

In countries embracing various racial and political groups nationalism provokes and embitters political quarrels abroad, but also domestic political quarrels

VIII-IX

It has been my desire to speak of Fascism as a political fact, abstaining altogether from denunciation and hatred.

For myself, my attitude towards Fascism is one of aloofness. I have always recognised it as a *de facto* Government, never as a *de jure* Government. After the coming of Fascism I never wished to enter the Chamber of Deputies, or to be elected as a deputy, or to play any part in Italian political life. From the moment when Fascism proclaimed its right to govern by force and not by consent, from the moment when it swept away all the guarantee of freedom contained in the Italian Constitution, from the moment when all freedom and even all security for the opponents of the regime ceased to exist in Italy, it became impossible to accept Fascism except as an existing fact. No democrat, no Liberal, can recognise Fascism as a lawful Government.

It is a mistake to think that any understanding with Fascism is possible. If Fascism lost its character as a tyranny it would have no further reason to exist. If it consented to free consultation of the electors, and thereby admitted the right of the majority to choose their own destiny, it would deny the very reason for the existence of an armed minority.

One may accept Fascism, therefore, as one may accept a despotic government based on force, or as one accepts Russian Bolshevism, but it cannot honestly be believed that the Italian Constitution still counts for anything, still less that Fascism accepts the principles of freedom and democracy. Such acceptance would amount to *renunciation* of its essential character, and that is the end.

* * * * *

Abroad, Fascism is described as a simple reactionary movement.

In reality, until it took the reins of government in Italy, Fascism was a movement which united those who were discontented as a result of the war, and it had a definitely revolutionary character.

In putting forward the Fascist programme Mussolini wrote some years ago —

"The opening historical era might be defined as that of mass politics and overgrown democracy, we cannot cross this movement"

Thus it was that the Fascist party arose in March 1919 as an expression of "overgrown democracy," and Mussolini himself drew up its programme, which is worth reproducing in full

This was what the Fascists of Italy proposed —

8 Maximum social services, improvement of public health, all kinds of public assistance, etc

9 Dissolution of joint stock companies and of financial combines, the prohibition of all speculation by the banks and on the bourse Establishment of a national organisation, with provincial branches, for the allocation of credit

10 A census of individual fortunes with a view to their diminution Confiscation of unproductive wealth Repayment by the well to-do of the public debt incurred under the old regime

11 Prohibition of child labour below the age of sixteen A legal eight hour day The banishment of parasites who do not make themselves useful to the community

12 Reorganisation of production on a basis of the direct participation of all workers in the profits The land to be restored to the peasants in order that it may be cultivated by peasant associations The administration of industry, transport, and public services to be entrusted to unions of technical experts and workers Suppression of every kind of individual speculation and the establishment of the social principle of the common national well being

13 Abolition of secret diplomacy

14 An international policy openly inspired by the solidarity of the peoples and their independence within a Confederation of Nations, etc

As Mussolini said, he believed in 1919 that Europe was moving towards overgrown democracy He flung himself Leftwards, into a movement which is at once nationalist, Socialist, and revolutionary

After 1921, however, he became convinced of the prevailing influence of reaction He flung himself to the Right with even greater rapidity

Ideas are of no importance whatever to him or rather ideas are modified to suit the moment and his personal prospects

The programme which Mussolini drew up for the Fascists in 1919, which enabled many progressives to join him, is an absolute negation of everything that Italian Fascism did

financial measures were often injurious, and were adopted for the benefit of the moneyed classes. After abolishing the tax on wine and increasing that on sugar, the Fascists even went so far as to abolish death duties.

/ Italy is the only country in the world which has taken this step, and she has done it because the party in power wants to win the moneyed classes.

X

Benedetto Croce's study entitled "*Liberalismo*," in the issue of *La Critica* for March 1923, contains very true reflections on this subject. Whilst Liberalism, he says, has a future, every act of autocracy bears the mark of its transitory personal character. A Liberal cannot be converted to the belief in autocracy or to the Communist ideal, because he already accepts them in so far as they are permissible.

He is equally opposed to the suppression of the State, which is involved in the former, and to the worship of the State, which the latter implies. On the other hand, the gradual conversion of Communists and authoritarians to Liberalism is altogether natural, as experience and reflection penetrate their minds and gain the upper hand.

If we could read men's minds to their depths, how many of the authors of the new authoritarian ideal, who go about announcing the death of Liberty, would appear troubled and perplexed!

XI

One of the chief reasons for the attraction still exercised by Bolshevism over the mass of the people, in spite of its economic failure, is that there are those who detect it everywhere. No propaganda benefits Bolshevism more than that of the most reactionary English newspapers, which attribute everything to it. These are the same papers which praise Fascism.

especially children, by European capitalists who represent Christian civilisation

Where suffering is great and unrest goes deep the preachers of rebellion find fertile soil. Zinovief, the representative of the Soviets, says truly "Our propaganda in China has been helped by exceptional circumstances, we should never have dared to hope for so much." These "exceptional circumstances" were created by the greediest and most dishonest Capitalism known to history.

Much has already been written about the blunders committed in Morocco by clerical Spain, and the action of the Spanish militarist Government. In addressing the Pope—who is far too wise to have been pleased—Alphonso XIII spoke, in short, of a Holy War, and of forcing the Cross on Mohammedan believers. No better argument could have been used in favour of Abd el Krim and his Islamic propaganda. King Alphonso's address, attributed to Father Torres, was distributed throughout Islam. The Spanish clerical watchword of "War! War on the Moroccan infidels!" sums up all the medieval vulgarity of Spanish clericalism.

XIII

Dante's words are quoted from Canto XXII of the *Paradise* (prose translation by H. P. Tozer). St. Benedict is speaking, and refers to the disregarded rules of his monastic order.—*Translator's Note*

XV

A number of official documents prove the diminution of European wealth, and consequently of European power, following the war.

The International Labour Office of the League of Nations has published an inquiry into European production, in seven large volumes, showing that it is greatly reduced both in agriculture and industry.

After close study I am convinced that the disunion and

dissension brought about by the war have contributed far more than the war itself to European depression, and that now, having destroyed, we must reconstruct.

What we must do is to restore political and economic freedom to a place of honour, and to prepare the way for the United States of Europe by vast tariff and economic unions

TRUE PEACE IS TO BE FOUND ONLY IN THE UNITED STATES OF EUROPE.

That is what I demonstrated at length in my book, *Le Paix* (1921)

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